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Affiliation Among Political Violence Groups: Signaling Commitment

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Affiliation Among Political Violence Groups: Signaling Commitment

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Dedicated to my grandparents, Elaine and Papa Jack

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Abstract

Affiliation Among Political Violence Groups: Signaling Commitment

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Why do existing political violence groups become affiliates of a parent organization? Previous literature regarding alliances in civil conflicts has often focused on these relationships horizontally, in which all groups are equal. Often importance is placed on only the number of factions involved overall. However, my research demonstrates the utilization of affiliation as a signal. Groups can utilize their relationship with a parent organization in order to bring in new resources.

Parent organizations are often better known with an established "brand" which supporters follow. For example, al-Qaeda has cultivated a jihadist brand which attracts followers worldwide. When lesser-known groups affiliate with a parent organization, the audience of that parent organizations can divert valuable resources, such as fighters or additional financing, to affiliate groups because they know the group follows the same brand. Yet the costs of affiliation remain very high as affiliated groups increase the potential for counter-insurgency operations once they increase their profile by aligning with a well-known parent organization. I establish that affiliation can be used as a credible signal when costs of subsequent counterinsurgency are

high enough to demonstrate a group's loyalty to their parent's goals. The audience is then willing to give resources to groups who prove their commitment by risking affiliation.

Utilizing a formal model, a large-scale randomized survey experiment conducted in Pakistan and India (n ~ 1,000), and statistical analysis with a novel dataset I coded consisting of all South Asian political violence groups and their alliances (n = 367), I establish that affiliation can be used as a credible signal when costs of subsequent counterinsurgency are high enough to demonstrate a group's loyalty to their parent's goals. The audience is then willing to give resources to groups who prove their commitment by risking affiliation. This line of research expands on a new dynamic in the alliance literature. When forming alliances, groups can leverage the vertical nature of their relationship with a parent organization in order to bring resources from the brand's audience to their own geostrategic conflicts.

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CHAPTER 1

1. Introduction

The benefits of alliances among political violence groups can be far-reaching[1]. From overcoming collective action issues, to training, military, and financial benefits, to increased negotiation power, groups stand to gain greatly from these arrangements. Of course, the downsides include the costs of internal discord, the difficulties in negotiating and dividing up winnings amongst disparate groups, as well as the potential for rivalries. These potential costs and benefits are most often conceptualized among horizontal alliances, in which groups are on equal footing. Yet, when examining the depth of ties among these alliances, we observe a new set of dynamics within these relationships. Rather than horizontal relationships in which all groups are thought of as equals, groups can affiliate with a parent organization in a more vertical alignment in which one group holds a clear parent organization role.[2] Taking into account both the costs and benefits these relationships possess, I develop a theory of vertical alliances to explain why political violence groups choose to affiliate with a parent organization.[3] Taking into account the high costs of affiliation which can serve as a signal of commitment to the parent organization's cause, I find these affiliate groups can ultimately bring in benefits from members of the parent organization's support base.

The group al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) highlights these dynamics. The group paid great costs upon pledging but were willing to risk these in order to gain increased sources of support for their cause. Before founding AQI, a branch of Osama bin Laden's core al-Qaeda group, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi was a Jordanian who fought on the side of the mujahedeen in Afghanistan as

[1] Political violence groups include terrorists, rebels, and militias

[2] The terms pledge, align, and affiliate are used interchangeably throughout the dissertation

[3] This theory accounts for the decision of the affiliate groups to pledge and the corresponding support they can receive. For research on the specific decisions of parent organizations to seek out pledges or not, see section 1.3.4

they resisted the Soviets in the 1980's. Forced out of Afghanistan following the US-led invasion, al-Zarqawi moved to Iraq, founding Jamaat al-Tawhid wal-Jihad (JTJ) in 2001. Surviving the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, JTJ led an insurgency effort, successfully uniting Iraqi Sunnis against the US coalition. JTJ accomplished remarkable feats compared to other insurgency groups in Iraq, effectively using the internet to spread their message and recruit fighters and utilizing violent methods such as suicide bombing and proving to be a real thorn in the side of the US. Still, with the coalition's attention split between five local Iraqi insurgency groups, JTJ operated in relative safety (Hashim 2014).

However, despite a relatively successful insurgency, al-Zarqawi and JTJ still formally pledged allegiance to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda in October of 2004, creating AQI. Expanding their goals to be more transnational in nature—attacking western infidels and Muslim apostates and re-creating the Islamic Caliphate—catapulted AQI to the top of the coalition's counter-terrorism list. Yet, the base of support for AQI continued to grow. Disgruntled Sunnis in Iraq and beyond continued to provide increasing sanctuaries, resources, and fighters for AQI. They trusted AQI as a group committed to the al-Qaeda cause. Still, in the end al-Zarqawi was specifically targeted and killed in a drone strike June, 2006. The US surge of troops in 2007 directed much of its force against AQI and its supporters (Hashim 2014). By the end of 2008, AQI was initially defeated, their Sunni base of support was left in ruins and the coalition troops began pulling out of Iraq (Fishman 2008).

The case of AQI underscores the apparent paradox of affiliation. Why do existing political violence groups become affiliates of a parent organization? This pattern of alignment among political violence groups, in which one group is the clear parent organization, has been observed among many types of political violence groups – from terrorist, to rebels, to militias.

Yet, this affiliation is puzzling. When these lesser-known groups align with a well-known parent organization, they now draw the same counter-political violence attention of the national or international community which is already committed to stopping the parent organization. Why would groups risk this increased chance of a crackdown and their ultimate demise?

While alignment from the parent organization's perspective and alliances in general have been studied, the incentives of potential affiliate groups to purposefully align with the "brand" of a parent organization remains an understudied, yet important part of the civil conflict literature.[4] These affiliations are often lumped into the general alliance literature, with the sum of the groups studied as one unit. Even disaggregated literature on the fragmentation of movements still focuses on the ability of the unit as a whole to fight and bargain with the state in civil wars or on the resources groups can exchange between one another in the terrorism literature.

I instead present a vertical theory of affiliation in which the better-known brand of the parent organization draws in affiliates, specifically because of these high costs. Groups can use the cost associated with a potential crackdown after their affiliation as a credible signal to potential supporters. Affiliates can risk this crackdown to prove their loyalty to the parent organization's expanded goals and ultimately gain resources from this broader base of supporters who follow the parent organization because they know they are supporting committed groups.

1.1 The Puzzle of Affiliation

Affiliation with a parent organization is not a pattern we should expect to widely observe, because of the backlash associated with it. Yet, it has proven to be a persistent phenomenon across political violence groups. For example, a parent organization such as al-Qaeda has drawn

[4] I utilize the term "brand" as a short-hand term for the ideology or set of expanded goals the parent organization cultivates in order to secure a broad base of support. It is not meant to be interpreted in the context of marketing or other business literature.

multiple affiliate groups spanning from Africa to Asia, all of whom fight for al-Qaeda's jihadist goals in their own respective regions (Hoffman 2018). As of 2015, 74 entities have pledged allegiance to al-Qaeda or ISIL, despite active counterterrorism efforts specifically aimed at curving pledging. Indeed, from the above example, affiliates of al-Qaeda are subjected to mandatory sanctions by all UN member states, including travel bans and financial freezes (1267 Sanctions List 2015).

Beyond terrorism, other types of groups affiliate with parent organizations as well, despite domestic or international backlash. Within civil wars, rebel groups have often aligned under the flag of one central group. For example, Colonel Riad al-Asaad formed the Free Syrian Army in 2011 and soon began seeking affiliate groups to join (BBC 2013). Immediately, these aligned groups became the center-piece of the pro-Syrian coalition's counter-insurgency efforts.

Instead of forming an alignment amongst rebel groups, some groups instead align with the government as a militia. In the 1965 Kashmir War, the Razakar and Mujahid militias that existed in the Pakistani-aligned region of Kashmir became affiliates of the Pakistani government, using the militias as the majority of their troops. Yet, Pakistan has denied formal ties with the militia, publicly supporting the Indian troop's counterstrikes and UN intervention against the militias (Kapur & Gaguly 2012).

The examples above highlight this alignment puzzle. In each case, groups align with a parent organization and come under attack. As evidenced with AQI, al-Zarqawi had safely made it through two wars (Afghanistan and the initial US invasion) and JTJ was successfully operating as an insurgency and terrorist group in Iraq, yet they still pledged allegiance to al-Qaeda, bringing the backlash of the US-led coalition squarely upon them. Why would a group and its

supporters risk the backlash associated with becoming an affiliate of a well-established parent-organization, drawing the counter-extremist efforts of a wider community?

1.2 Theoretical Overview: Why Affiliate?

To answer this over-arching question, I have developed a formal model in which groups pledge allegiance to a parent-organization based on considerations of their own goals, the alignment of their goals with their potential expanded audience, and anticipation of the crackdowns they will experience. Political violence groups can use a pledge as a costly signal that they are willing to incur these risks in order to get support from a broader audience, pulled from the base of the parent organization.

The better-known parent organization generally has a broad base of supporters who follow the brand of the parent organization. For example, al-Qaeda has a worldwide network of supporters who are drawn to their Salafi jihadist ideology. This base audience has resources that it can potentially send to groups, such as fighters or finances, once they affiliate with the brand of the parent organization. However, this base audience only wants to send these resources to groups who are truly aligned with the parent organization's goals. They want these resources to promote the goals which drew them to the parent organization's ideology in the first place. Thus, an ideal affiliate group will have these expanded goals which align with the parent organization's goals, rather than pursuing their own, localized set of goals.

The audience knows groups have an incentive to bluff about their goals to get resources, though. Affiliation serves as a costly signal of a group's commitment to the expanded set of goals of the parent organization. Pledging allegiance gives information about the group's type – or whether they will pursue the parent organization's goals or not. Groups need to signal to potential supporters because of the low information arena within which they operate.

Pledging is a way to communicate this information. It is a costly signal because once affiliated, the profile of the group raises. This opens them up to the national or international crackdown, already experienced by the parent organization. For example, by pledging allegiance to al-Qaeda, terrorist groups know they will have an increased risk of backlash—such as drone strikes, ground troop attacks or disrupted finances—from the international community committed to eradicating terrorism.

Thus, only groups willing to pursue the parent organization's expanded set of goals should be the type willing to send this signal and affiliate. When this signal is received by the parent organization's broader audience, these supporters can send them resources, knowing they are most likely supporting loyal affiliates. Because potential supporters want to back a capable, driven group, affiliation serves as a way to gain support and increase a group's resources from a new, broader pool of supporters. AQI, for example, risked the costs of affiliation with al-Qaeda and in turn received increased support from al-Qaeda's base of supporters world-wide post-pledging. Post-pledge, bin Laden even released a statement asking for support to flow to AQI, proclaiming "We ask God to accept this unity and bless it and for all to know, the dear mujahed brother Abu Musab al-Zarqawi is the prince of al Qaeda in Iraq, so we ask all our organization brethren to listen to him and obey him in his good deeds" (CNN 2004). In turn, after AQI proved their dedication by risking the backlash of the international community within Iraq, supporters of the broader al-Qaeda base sent resources to AQI including foreign fighters and increased financial support.

In sum, I argue that political violence groups can affiliate with a parent organization in order to secure new support from that organization's audience. Parent organizations are often better known with an established brand which supporters follow. When lesser-known groups

affiliate with a parent organization, the audience of that parent organizations can divert valuable resources, such as fighters or additional financing, to affiliate groups because they know the group follows the same brand.

Yet the costs of affiliation remain very high as affiliated groups increase the potential for counter-insurgency operations once they increase their profile by aligning with a well-known parent organization. I establish that affiliation can be used as a credible signal when costs of subsequent counterinsurgency are high enough to demonstrate a group's loyalty to their parent's goals. The audience is then willing to give resources to groups who prove their commitment by risking affiliation.

1.3 EXIGENT LITERATURE

1.3.1 Alignment and Alliances in Other Literature

International relations has long sought to answer why states form formal alliances. Liberals and constructivists argue similarities in domestic politics of states can result in long lasting, sustained cooperation between states (Lake 1996). Realists, on the other hand, widely view alliances as a means to pursue interests. They are temporary aggregations of capabilities in order to increase security against a common enemy. When the threat passes, the alliance is no longer need (Morgenthau 1973; Waltz 1979). Powell (1991) argues that states can in fact use alliances as a foreign policy tool. In exchange for protection, weaker states will make concessions to stronger states with a common threat. Leaders can further utilize alliances to provide credible information to other states about the likelihood of intervention (Morrow 1994; Fearon 1997).

The effects of alliances among states vary widely depending on the type of alliance. Defensive alliances, in which a state guarantees intervention if an ally is invaded, successfully

serve as a deterrent threat. However, offensive alliances, in which a state agrees to join an attack against a mutual target, and promises of non-intervention, have a negative effect, leading to increased conflict. These types prove to increase the confidence of a challenger that they will succeed with aggression (Leeds 2003). Though they can bring insights, the scale international alliances among states often cannot map onto sub-national alliances due to the sovereignty and formality of state alliances.

Sub-national groups outside have also long sought alliances. Unlike other political violence groups, gangs are generally more profit-guided than guided by a goal of overthrowing the existing regime or claiming territory of their own. They wish to co-opt existing institutions, rather than subvert them to create their own institution (Osorio 2013). Reasons gangs seek to expand by taking on affiliate groups include reducing geographic distance from drug suppliers and consumers, accessing international supply routes, and responding to shifts in the domestic policies of drug importers (Kalyvas 2015). Democratization is often cited as a cause of expansion. Democracies tend to more actively counter gang activity, destroying patronage systems and upsetting the low-level violence equilibrium, opening the door to growth (Villarreal 2002).

Gangs have also relied on the marginalization of immigrants to expand into new areas. For example, MS-13 originated in Los Angeles. They have had ties to El Salvador from their onset. MS-13 gave opportunities to these immigrants that they otherwise would not have had, ultimately setting an example of how gangs could be run effectively. The deportation of Salvadorans from America led to former members joining existing Salvadoran gangs (pandillas) and eventually aligning these gangs with the MS-13 parent organization, seen as the ideal (Decker et al 2009; Cruz 2007).

Social movements have further built transnational ties through alignment. Activists can learn from one another outside of formal channels, exchanging best practices, engaging in leadership brokering and developing transnational public spheres, such as conferences. Bounded by limited financial resources and political constraints, transnational social movements can bond together in order to form new world policy. For example, states wishing to lobby the World Trade Organization will form alignments in order to adopt the best frame of the social issue possible (Bandy & Smith 2004).

Domestically, political parties represent an environment ripe with alliance dynamics. Within the United States, we often see legislators reach across party lines to co-sponsor a bill with a member of the opposite part in order to avoid having to wrangle members within the rank and file of their own party. Parliamentary systems are further built on the premise of coalition building. Parties must bargain and build their alliances in order to get and maintain power. In the face of defection from any given party, coalitions must build their alliance with the goal of a long-lasting party dynamic that can stand up to the opposition. Both of these cases represent how internal contests can be influenced by external sources.

1.3.2 Group Level: Why Political Violence Groups Form Alliances

Within the political violence literature, specifically, much work has explored why these groups join forces. The civil war literature has focused on horizontal alliances among rebel groups. The main arguments presented focus on collective action problems and material interests. The terrorism literature, on the other hand, has focused specifically on affiliation with a parent organization, mainly al-Qaeda. The militia literature has widely focused on the incentives of governments, rather than the militias themselves.

Rebel Groups

Collective Action Problems

Groups can horizontally align to overcome inherent collective action problems. In arenas in which several groups are interested in achieving the same goal, there exists a collective action problem that must be surmounted. If the outcome of a conflict is a public good, then groups have the incentive to free-ride (Kalyvas and Kocher 2007; Lichbach 1998). One way to overcome this is selective incentives. For example, in civil wars, rebels often have great potential to loot, as evidenced in the opportunistic "greed" literature (Collier and Hoeffler 2004).

Yet, there is also a security dilemma among groups that ally – today's ally may be tomorrow's enemy. While this can lead to issues of instability, coordination and cooperation, the generation of competition within alliances also allows groups to overcome this collective action problem (Zeigler 2013). Because of this mutual suspicion among groups in a coalition—that they may have to one day fight one another—groups are incentivized to be as capable as their partners. They must be ready today to fight their partner tomorrow. This preparedness in the wake of a potential coalition collapse results in groups' participation both in the alliance formation and fighting.

Bapat and Bond (2012) argue that state sponsors can also help overcome this commitment problem. A rebel group can gain security from a state patron, while improving their capabilities and lowering the costs of a civil war. A state sponsor can further coordinate among rebel alliances, controlling supplies and punishing defectors (Byman 2005). In return, rebel groups must give up decision-making autonomy. Still, for many rebel groups, this coordination of cooperation among rebel groups proves to be worth it, especially for rebel groups facing a strong government or who fear exploitation within their alliance (Bapat and Bond 2012).

Material Incentives

These arguments assume the critical goal of a rebel group is power. They want to survive and ultimately achieve postwar power. In general, rebel groups have long engaged in "rebel diplomacy," seeking political or material advantages from abroad. This comes in the form of visibility, credibility, and acceptance on the world stage (Huang 2016). Rebel groups often seek external state support as a means to achieve this (Salehyan 2011). However, these dynamics also exist internally.

Within horizontal alliances, Christia (2012) argues they follow a minimum winning coalition (MWC) logic. Groups balance entering an alliance that is large enough to win, but small enough to ensure that they receive the greatest possible spoils after winning. If the MWC is passed, groups will find another alliance to join. Thus, it is the relative power between rebel groups within an alliance, rather than more normative factors such as identity, that drives the formation and fractionalization of rebel alliances.

Ideology

Ideology is a source of collective identity. This identity can be focused around ideals such as Marxism, nationalism, religion, or ethnicity. Ideology forges alliances by bringing group cohesion, letting the soldiers know the cause and objectives. Gade et al. (2019) argue ideology forms the key aspect in choosing alliance partners, under considerations of conflict framing, conception of the ideal polity, and territorial aspiration.

Terrorism

Cooperative Relationships

Cooperation among terrorist groups is rarer, given the clandestine nature of terrorist groups. An alliance has the potential to open up operational vulnerabilities as the scope of

efforts and communications increases. Yet, the benefits remain great - operational effectiveness, greater range and efficiency of attacks, and the opportunity to enhance legitimacy by increasing the overall stature of the cause.

Rather than mere material incentives, though, these alliances generally necessitate a clearly shared ideology and/or shared enemies. These shared features tend to generate hubs, which serve as a central point for organizational adaptation and learning. Under this theory, young groups or groups in a rapidly changing conflict environment tend to be the most vulnerable, and thus the most in need of an alliance (Bacon 2018). When distinguishing between cooperative alliances and rivalry relationships, Phillips (2018) finds distinguishing features that align with this notion. Cooperation tends to exist among groups fighting for territory or religious change.

Industrial Organizational Psychology

The terrorism literature has also explicitly examined why groups align with a parent organization (al-Qaeda, in particular) utilizing I/O psychology. Groups are able to gain a comparative advantage, with different groups offering different expertise and local knowledge. They can also expand the scale and scope of operations. Delegating duties takes the burden off of the parent organization. They also add new "customers and products" by expanding and can promote organizational learning, resulting in greater payoffs at a lower cost. The greatest benefit to groups pledging, though, is joining the brand of al-Qaeda (Byman 2014). It is recognized worldwide. Being part of al-Qaeda generates exposure and a legitimization for these individual groups that is difficult to garner on their own.

Groups must also attempt to mitigate the risks of merging, however (Mendelsohn 2011). The exposure affiliates gain from pledging comes a great cost. It creates a need to balance local

goals, such as the insurgency in Iraq, with the parent organization's more transnational goals, such as attacking western targets and reestablishing the Caliphate (Loidolt 2011). Also, increased counterterrorism pressure almost always follows post-pledging. They target communications, finances and members of the group. This makes operating immensely more difficult and increases the probability that group members will be directly targeted and arrested or killed, such as the case with AQI (Byman 2014). Of course, this overarching theory could be applied to all type of political violence groups.

Yet, this theory remains incomplete when translated to political violence groups. Perhaps most glaring is the starting foundation in the business literature, that firms aim to be profit maximizing, does not uniformly apply. The goals of many political violence groups, on the other hand, is often to bring about political change, no matter the cost. While they may want to promote efficiency or global-reach, they do not have to same fundamental profit-seeking calculation mechanism as a business firm (Byman 2014).

1.3.3 Effects of Alliances among Political Violence Groups

Beyond why groups align, there is a large literature on under what conditions political violence groups form alliances and what are the observable implications of joining forces. Most studies have focused on the absolute number of allies an actor has or the number of groups within a movement, though.[5] By tacitly assuming an equal relationship among groups, this body of literature misses the effects caused by alignment with a parent organization, specifically.

Rebel Groups

Though early literature often conceptualized rebel group alliances as a unitary actor fighting against the government, more recent studies have focused on the disaggregation of these

[5] Horowitz and Potter (2014) are a notable exception

alliances to allow for different capabilities and preferences. Two separate sets of effects have stemmed from this line of research. First, answering what are the effects of have multiple rebel groups within a movement. These fragmentation arguments focus not on direct alliances, but more simply on multiple groups fighting for the same movement's cause.

Fragmentation leading to civil war has been a key finding in the literature. Under a bargaining framework, movements that experience fragmentation have more severe informational and commitment problems. They are more prone to bargaining failures because the ideal point, or preferred policy they are willing to fight over, cannot be agreed upon within a fractured movement. Informational problems are exacerbated because both sides' natural incentive to misrepresent is magnified by factions that can act independently. Even with an agreement, the lack of ideal point generates a commitment problem because the inconsistency of policy preferences today results in doubt over the willingness to uphold agreements in the future (Cunningham 2013).

The duration of civil wars in the midst of fragmentation has further been a key dependent variable. Formal theories tended to predict that a more complicated war is a longer war, as a stalemate is more likely among actors with multiple preferences. Utilizing computational methods, Findley and Rudloff (2012) find this is not always the case. Fragmentation often leads to shorter wars ending in a negotiated settlement. When new actors join, it becomes clear they cannot beat all other actors. It becomes optimal to negotiate instead of fighting a prolong war.

Alternatively, new actors may not be as committed and thus open to settlements short of victory. Further predicting shorter wars, Driscoll (2012) demonstrates warlords in competition can build coalitions in order to quickly gain the strength to take the capital and gain the spoils of war. Civilian leadership installed will provide selective accommodation to militia leaders in this

initial coalition, thus cementing the power of both sides and locking out warlords that did not initially collude.

Examining more formal alliances among rebel groups, Akcinaroglu (2012) uses observational data to assess how rebel alliances affect war duration. Joining an alliance increases the relative strength of each group while reducing the resources the government can allot to any one group. This ultimately prolongs wars, as alliances won't lose because they allow weaker actors to become stronger by sharing scarce resources, tactical support and intelligence. However, the probability of peace settlements is not increased since the government cannot cheaply buy off a group of many rebels.

Finally, competition within rebel groups leads to an increased probability in the recurrence of civil wars. Alliances face an internal security dilemma in which each actor fears defection. Thus, members increase their own relative capabilities in order to respond in kind to defections. Furthermore, groups won't freeride in an alliance as they all need to be prepared for possible fragmentation, when you may need to fight your enemy. Correspondingly, this build up of capabilities in competitive alliances leads to civil war recurrence as members cannot trust power-sharing agreements (Zeigler 2013).

Terrorism

Examining the number of ties terrorist groups have with other terrorist groups, Asal and Rethemeyer (2008) find that alliances ultimately bolster the capabilities of groups in an alliance, as they spread out the mobilization of tasks and diversify risks. In light of these bolstered capabilities, they find the more positive ties a group possesses, the more lethal their attacks are on average.

Instead of just absolute numbers, Horowitz and Potter (2014) argue it is instead the depth of ties in an alliance that drives lethality outcomes. All else equal, groups prefer to ally with stronger groups. The aggregate abilities of groups in an alliance is often higher, allowing them to undertake larger scale attacks. This is because they can access tactical and technological develops from their allies, in the form of weaponry and training. Another partner in the core network, measured by eigenvector centrality, gives resources that an isolated partner cannot. Again, well-connected groups are found to be, on average, more lethal than poorly connected groups.

Militia

Much like rebel groups allying in civil wars can increase the rebels' chance of victory, militias allying with a government can increase the probability of a government victory. Pro-government militias both give a wealth of tactical intelligence to the government by leveraging local knowledge, as well as isolating insurgents from non-combatant populations physically as well as politically, thus limiting insurgent resources (Peic 2014).

The abundance of literature on militias in civil wars, however, has focused on their accountability to their state sponsor. As discussed previously, theories of militias posit that states have a strategic interest to outsource violence to militias to avoid accountability in civil wars. In turn, they also lack control over these militia and the upholding of human rights (Mitchell, Carey, and Butler 2014). Accordingly, militias are theorized to utilize more indiscriminate violence, often targeting civilians. Yet, recent literature has found that this indiscriminate violence is mediated by the recruitment networks. Militias kill fewer civilians when recruiting from their own community, or the same constituency as the rebels (Stanton 2015).

1.3.4 Parent Organization Level: Why parent organizations seek affiliates

Several existing theories account for why parent organizations seek out affiliates. For example, the terrorism literature has utilized Prospect Theory in which a group's strength determines its actions; the militia literature has utilized the role of the central government and accountability; yet, the rebel group's literature has almost uniformly treated alliances and fragmentation within civil wars as horizontal. However, each of these theories only accounts for the decision calculus of the parent organization or horizontal alignments. The choice of a potential affiliate to join the brand of the parent organization remains under-explored, yet a key aspect of understanding the dynamics between parent organizations and their subordinates.

Terrorism

Terrorist groups have seen a recent wave of pledging, mostly among Islamic groups pledging allegiance to the parent organizations of al-Qaeda or ISIS. Situational factors, such as how much pressure the group is under, have been utilized to inform their decision-making in a need-vs-opportunity framework. For example, using Prospect Theory, we can understand why al-Qaeda pursues specific affiliations. The risk propensity of al-Qaeda depends on their domain. When they are in a domain of gains, they are risk-adverse. If they are in a domain of losses, they are risk acceptant (Quattrone and Tversky 1988). al-Qaeda was in a domain of losses when their survival was threatened post-9/11. They were driven to expansion by need rather than opportunity. They did not utilize a forward-looking costs versus benefits evaluation of when and which pledges to pursue and accept.

Rather, their position of weakness after the international community increased counterterrorism measures post-9/11 forced their hand. The weaker al-Qaeda is, the more inclined they are to form affiliations. Their attacks in the late 1990's and early 2000's failed to

mobilize the *umma* (Islamic community). There was no mass commitment to the greater jihadi movement under al-Qaeda. In response, al-Qaeda was forced to mobilize the *umma* in a piecemeal manner—by forming affiliations. In co-opting other jihadi movements, al-Qaeda continues to survive despite great pressure and make progress towards their ultimate goal of an Islamic caliphate. Accordingly, they were willing to risk accepting affiliates, including some with different preferences that may threaten the brand name, in order to potentially expand and survive. This need-driven action is inherently risky, but al-Qaeda was forced into the choice (Mendelsohn 2016). Still, though al-Qaeda was in a situation of need, it remains unclear why so many groups would pledge allegiance to them, thus drawing the ire of the international communities' counterterrorism measures upon themselves.

Militia

Militias are groups that utilize political violence but operate outside the command structure of the government-sponsored military or police forces. They have been used as auxiliary troops in both inter and intrastate wars, while not being connected to the government in an official capacity. Because of their informal status and often poor training, governments often have a more difficult time controlling militia, often leading to a divergence of actions from the preferences of the government. For example, militias are often associated with a higher number of civilian casualties (Mitchell, Carey, and Butler 2014). Yet, governments still utilize them with some regularity. Despite the costs of divergent preferences, militias still minimize the costs of counterinsurgency, give local knowledge, legitimacy and access to regions in which the government may not otherwise have reach, or serve as a force multiplier when the army is depleted or purged (Jentzsch, Kalyvas, and Schubiger 2015; Carey, Colaresi, and Mitchell 2015; Kalyvas 2006; Eck 2015).

The biggest benefit of utilizing a militia is they allow governments to evade responsibility for violence against rebels. Governments purposefully create informal ties with militias to avoid accountability for their violence. By providing little information about their relationships with the militia and by imposing a low amount of sanctions on the groups (mostly for show), accountability cannot be established (Carey et al 2014).

Regardless of why governments utilize militias, however, the link between these local militias and their choice to align with the government remains unclear. For example, in Pakistan, the government has historically utilized militias to carry out their foreign policy strategy in Kashmir. In the first Kashmir war in the late 1940's, they send thousands of Afridi tribesman into the region in an attempt to induce Kashmir's accession to Pakistan. In the 1965 Kashmir War, the Pakistani government aligned with and trained the Razakar and Mujahid militias that existed in the Pakistani-aligned region of Kashmir, using the militias as the majority of their troops. Yet, in both cases, Pakistan has denied formal ties with the militia, publicly supporting the Indian troop's counterstrikes and UN intervention against the militias (Kapur & Gaguly 2012). Why would these militias align with the government, knowing they would not be supported in the crackdown against them?

Rebel Groups

Though not conceptualized as affiliation, the civil war literature has recently examined the role of disparate power in alliance formation within civil wars. Rebel groups can make a tradeoff between decision-making autonomy and increasing capabilities through asymmetric alliances, in which one group is more powerful. Powerful groups can still maintain autonomy over security by forming alliances with weaker partners amenable to influence. Weaker groups

can receive greater security considerations in return. In the Syrian context, little evidence has been found to support this theory (Gade et al. 2019).

1.4 Contribution: Groups choosing to affiliate with a parent organization

Previous literature has approached alignment from several different angles. Drawing from literature on alliances in other bodies, such as between states or political parties, political violence groups have been found to form alliances for several reasons. These range from rebel groups overcoming collective action costs to terrorist groups' material interests. The effects of alliances have also been widespread and inconclusive. Specifically examining parent organizations in hierarchical alliances, the terrorism literature has drawn from general I/O psychology and economics theories to describe why a group may seek out subordinates, while the militia literature has focused on the role of government accountability in forming these hierarchical alliances.

The roles of each of these types of groups—militia, terrorist and rebel—have been studied in isolation of one another. Yet, these groups overlap in many ways. Rebel groups often use terrorism as a tactic in civil wars. Terrorist groups will claim territory. Militias influence the length, intensity and outcome of civils wars in the same ways rebel groups do (Findley & Young 2012; Jentzsch et al 2015). Integrating a theory of political violence, regardless of subtype, will do away with the biases of these false dichotomies.

I instead generate a theory of alignment in which all types of political violence groups specifically search out a well-known parent organization with whom to align. They do so in order to gain access to the broader base of supporters associated with this parent organization. These supporters can provide valuable resources such as finances or act as fighters. The act of pledging serves as a costly signal to these potential supporters that the group is legitimate and

highly committed to the goals of the parent organization. This signal is costly because they open themselves up to a potential crackdown after pledging, as they come under the same counter political violence pressure as the parent organization. This theory is both specific to political violence groups, yet flexible enough to encompass many types of illicit groups across time with regards to any region, ideology, or time frame.

Overall, my work contributes to the civil conflict literature by helping us understand the strategic choices of political violence groups. Previous literature often utilizes heuristics to predict or explain the choices of these groups. For example, theories predict groups with the same ideology may all form an alliance or groups may seek minimum winning coalitions. Yet, these approaches often treat groups as interchangeable – any shared ideology should generate an alliance or any group can be part of a coalition, as long as it meets the minimum winning criteria. The lack of consideration to the group identity limits understanding of both who groups ally with, but also which groups choose not to form alliances. This decision to *not* form an alliance can be equally important. This work offers an explanation for why groups who do not want to or cannot pay the costs associated with joining an alliance with a parent organization, even though they share an ideology and have the potential for resource accumulation and would be assumed to join an alliance under previous theories, will instead choose to not enter one.

My work examines the politics behind these decisions. Affiliate groups specifically choose a parent organization to leverage their public announcement and the ensuing potential crackdown as a costly signal to receive resources. This strategic choice brings understanding to the reasoning behind who specifically groups choose to form alliances with, as well as the benefits this brings beyond just the high-level outcome of winning or losing.

This line of research further speaks to the broader state formation and building literature. Among states, there is a constant negotiation of institutional orders, including alliances, coalitions and hierarchies, particularly at key conflict points. States take these actions to try and increase capacity (ability to govern) and legitimacy (right to govern), ultimately challenging underlying state structure and redefining existing order (Wagner 2007, Lemke 2019).

Through vertical alliances, I offer a novel perspective of political violence groups taking similar coordinating actions to try to increase their own legitimacy and capacity. They can ultimately affect this same state formation process. Nested in layers below state-to-state interaction, political violence groups can form vertical alliances in order to increase their own capacity and legitimacy, allowing them to more effectively challenge and negotiate with states, with the potential to redefine the structure from below.

1.5 Overview of Dissertation

In the second chapter of this dissertation, I develop a formal model of signaling among potential affiliate groups. Groups can utilize a pledge to a parent organization in order to draw resources from potential supporters. These supporters follow the parent organization's ideology or subscribe to their expanded goals. This new audience can offer support to an aligned group who signals it also subscribes to this ideology. Support comes in many forms, from fighters, to finances, to a refusal to participate in counter-political violence activities against these groups. Supporters prefer to back committed, capable groups. Pledging serves as a costly signal of group's abilities, as groups aligned with a parent organization open themselves up to the same backlash faced by these parent organizations. This chapter thus lays out the logic of why groups would affiliate in the first place.

The third chapter provides an overview of the research design. Chapters four through six provide empirical tests of the assumptions and implications of the theory. Chapter 4 utilizes a comprehensive list of political violence groups in the South Asian countries of Afghanistan, Pakistan and India to predict when groups decide to pledge. I find support for the argument that the potential costs of a crackdown post-pledging drive this decision. In chapter 5, I explore when affiliate groups are more likely to receive resources. I expound upon the assumptions from the formal model that pledging generates a costly risk of backlash from the international community and that potential supporters observe this signal. Utilizing a randomized survey experiment administered to over 1,000 respondents in India and Pakistan, I verify these assumptions.

Chapter 6, published in the Journal of Peace Research, examines further effects of pledging on the violence levels of groups under certain circumstances. I find affiliates of al-Qaeda and ISIS must escalate their violence in both number and severity of attacks, following an outbidding logic, in order to differentiate themselves and gain support from the parent organization's broader Salafi Jihadist audience. This occurs when the marketplace of affiliate groups is over-crowded, thus rendering the information provided by pledging weaker. Groups must differentiate themselves in other ways.

CHAPTER 2

2. Theory

While the majority of the literature on affiliation has been situated solely in the terrorism literature and focused on the parent organization as the locus of the decision to align, the question remains: why would existing rebel, militia or terrorist groups affiliate with a parent organization, given the increased probability of a crackdown they face? Ultimately, affiliation can serve as a signal of the group's type (or commitment to the expanded goals of a parent organization) and result in the group gaining the support of a potential audience.

The question remains: how do you make this signal credible? Why should you be believed when your preferences cannot be directly observed and you have an incentive to bluff? The main way is making the signal costly. It must entail the incurrence of costs that an uncommitted party would not be willing to suffer. These costs can be generated in four ways: (1) costs arising from the risk of accidental war (Shelling 1960); (2) sunk costs inherent in the act of making the threat mobilizations (Fearon 1997; Slantchev 2011); (3) audience costs (Fearon 1997; Sartori 2005); and (4) costs imposed by the adversary in reaction to a threat (Trager 2010). Pledging generates costs via the fourth mechanism.

By aligning with a parent organization, groups know they will have an increased risk of backlash, such as task force targeting, drone strikes, ground troop attacks or disrupted finances, from the national or international community committed to eradicating political violence. The group will become higher profile, as they become part of the brand of an existing parent organization. Only groups willing to incur this risk pledge, thus making pledging a costly signal of the group's commitment to their goals and successes. It is the very risk from the international community generated by pledging that makes pledging worth it. This risk shows the

commitment of the group. Ultimately, groups that successfully align with a parent organization draw in an expanded base of supporters that want to provide resources to a legitimate group who is interested in achieving a bigger goal. In the above examples, these resources would be foreign fighters and finance networks for AQI, weapons and training opportunities for the Kashmiri militias, and an expanded market for Syrian affiliates.

2.1 SIGNALING GAME

I utilize a formal model as a structure for the theory for several reasons. First, it organizes the logic behind the theory presented above. This particular model serves as an proof of a pledging equilibrium and defines under what conditions it exists. Since pledging is a phenomenon that we should ostensibly not expect to observe, the formal model lays out the circumstances under which we would observe political violence groups to align with a parent organization and receive resources, further explored empirically in chapters 4 & 5. Second, I can then utilize the model to further explore patterns of pledging, as proposed in Chapter 6. The conditions of the model can help generate new empirical avenues to investigate (Clarke & Primo 2007).

2.1.1 The Model

Suppose a group (*G*) is an existing political violence group, such as a terrorist group, militia, or rebel group. *G* can potentially increase its support by pledging allegiance to a parent organization, because this larger, better known parent organization has a broader base of support. This base includes existing member of the parent organization and sympathizers who may be willing to offer resources, such as fighting or finances, to those aligned with the parent organization's goals that they know and support. By affiliating with this organization, *G* can get

access to this base of support and expand its pool of available resources needed to achieve its goals.

Next, suppose this audience (*A*) can choose to offer its support and resources to *G* or not. *A* can observe whether *G* has pledged allegiance to the parent organization or not. However, it is uncertain about the type of *G*—local or expanded. A local group is interested in achieving a regional or ideologically contained goal. For example, the IRA was interested in re-unifying a Catholic Ireland, but not spreading that ideology beyond those borders. An expanded group is interested in a larger goal.

A would prefer to support an expanded *G*. The worst option is supporting a local *G* who pledges in order to get resources. For example, the terrorist group Boko Haram pledged allegiance to al-Qaeda and later ISIS. Yet their goals turned out to be distinctly local—utilizing an extreme version of Sharia law in order to minimize the role of women and education in the Western mountains of Nigeria. Their preferences diverged so deeply from ISIS, al-Baghdadi (the leader of ISIS) denounced the Boko Haram leader in 2016 (Onyanga-Omara 2015).

The game tree in Figure 1 shows that Nature first chooses *G's* type, expanded with probability Φ and local with probability 1- Φ. This is only known by *G*. When expanded, *G* has a higher valuation its main goal than when *G* is local. It knows achievement of this expanded goal will have effects beyond just itself. A local *G* is only interested in its own group-specific goal, thus resulting in a lower valuation. To formalize this, the goal of either type is χ, where $\chi > 0$. When $\chi = \overline{\chi}$, *G* is the expanded type. When $\chi = \underline{\chi}$, *G* is the local type, where $0 < \underline{\chi} < \overline{\chi}$. For example, a pledged terrorist group such as AQI was interested not only in winning the insurgency in Iraq in 2003, but also restoring the Islamic Caliphate, as al-Qaeda called for. A

broader audience was then interested in supporting AQI than other local Iraqi insurgency groups. *G's* ambitions can thus shape *A's* incentives to support or not. *A* would prefer to stay neutral if *G* is local, but to support *G* if they are expanded because they have a better opportunity to achieve a bigger goal, $\overline{\chi}$.

Next, *G* chooses whether to pledge to a parent organization or not (pledge or ~pledge). If *G* pledges, it pays a cost but its probability of achieving its goal is boosted. Its probability remains at the baseline level if it does not pledge. *A* then chooses whether to support the group or not (support or ~support). If *A* supports, it pays a cost but also gains a boost in the probability of benefiting from the achievement of *G's* goal.

If *A* supports a pledged *G*, it is assumed there will be a national or international crackdown. Political violence groups always face some type of pressure from the government, as their actions threaten the government's monopoly on violence and thus must be attempted to be stopped (Bueno de Mesquita 2005). This crackdown is in addition to this baseline level of pressure that exist for all groups, pledged or not. For example, after a terrorist group pledges allegiance to al-Qaeda or ISIS, they are added to the UN 1267 Sanctions list, which mandates travel bans and financial freezes and authorizes the use of military force against these groups. Nature chooses with probability β if *G* will be significantly hindered in the probability of achieving their goals by this crackdown, paying α, and 1-β if *G* will not be hindered beyond normal government pressures and will not have to pay α (crackdown or ~crackdown).

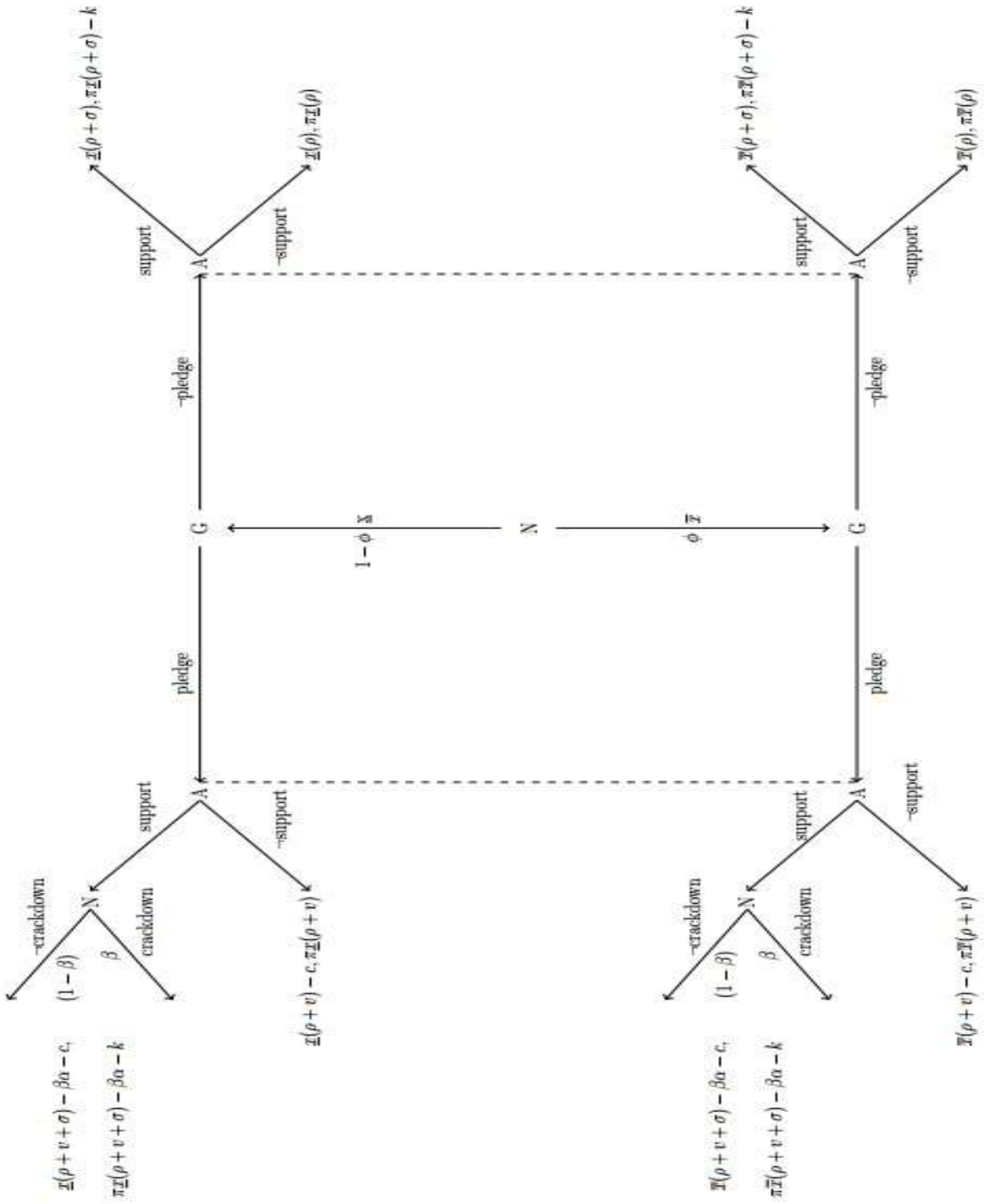

Figure 1: A Model of Pledging

The game can therefore end in four ways: *G* does not pledge and still receives support from *A* (~pledge, support); *G* does not pledge and does not receive support from *A* (~pledge, ~support); *G* pledges and does not receive support from *A* (pledge, ~support)*; G* pledges and receives support from *A,* with nature then choosing the probability of a successful crackdown (pledge, support).

After *A's* move, both players receive a payoff, χ, reflecting their expected outcome of achieving the goal, less their respective costs, such that $\chi>0$. *G* pays the cost, c, if it pledges. This represents costs such as losing some autonomy over group actions once aligned with a parent organization. *A* pays a cost to support, k. This reflects the actions of supporting, such as diverting fighters on finances to *G*. An expanded group receives the payoff $\chi = \overline{\chi}$, while a local group receives the payoff $\chi = \underline{\chi}$, where $0 < \underline{\chi} < \overline{\chi}$. For *A*, this payoff is modified by the bias term, π, where $0<\pi<1$. This represents the extent that *A's* (and the parent organization's) goals align with *G's*. Higher values of π are indicative of a tighter alignment.

The baseline probability of either player achieving this goal is ρ, such that $0<\rho<1$. This baseline probability can receive a boost when *G* pledges, *v,* and when *A,* supports, σ, such that $0<v<1$ and $0<\sigma<1$. Therefore the probability of achieving χ is:

$$(\rho + v + \sigma)$$

For the generic type of each player, the payoffs are as follows:

If (~pledge, ~support): $EU_G = \chi(\rho)$; $EU_A = \pi\chi(\rho)$

If (~pledge, support): $EU_G = \chi(\rho+\sigma)$; $EU_A = \pi\chi(\rho+\sigma) - k$

If (pledge, ~support): $EU_G = \chi(\rho+v) - c$; $EU_A = \pi\chi(\rho+v)$

If (pledge, support): $EU_G = \chi(\rho+v+\sigma) - \beta\alpha - c$; $EU_A = \pi\chi(\rho+v+\sigma) - \beta\alpha - k$

Thus pledging and supporting can increase the probability of receiving the payoff χ with the boost of v+σ. But this must be weighed against the probability of paying the costs of a crackdown, βα. This highlights the strategic problem. The value of χ can offset this decreased likelihood of achieving the goal, but *A* is uncertain as to the type, and thus value, of *G*. Below, I show a set of equilibria in which *G* utilizes pledging as a way to signal its type.

2.1.2 Equilibria Analysis

Figure 2 plots the existence of four different equilibria as a function of *G's* cost for pledging, c, and *A's* cost for supporting a group, k.[6] The four equilibria are: a separating equilibrium in which only expanded types of *G* pledge and *A* supports when a group pledges; a semi-separating equilibrium in which the local *G* uses a mixing strategy when deciding to pledge and *A* uses a mixing strategy to decide when to support after observing pledge; a pooling equilibrium in which all types of *G* pledge and *A* supports after observing pledge; and a pooling equilibrium in which no types of *G* pledge and *A* never supports after observing no pledge.

[6] While other equilibria exist to fill out the space, I focus on these four based on the parameters of interest.

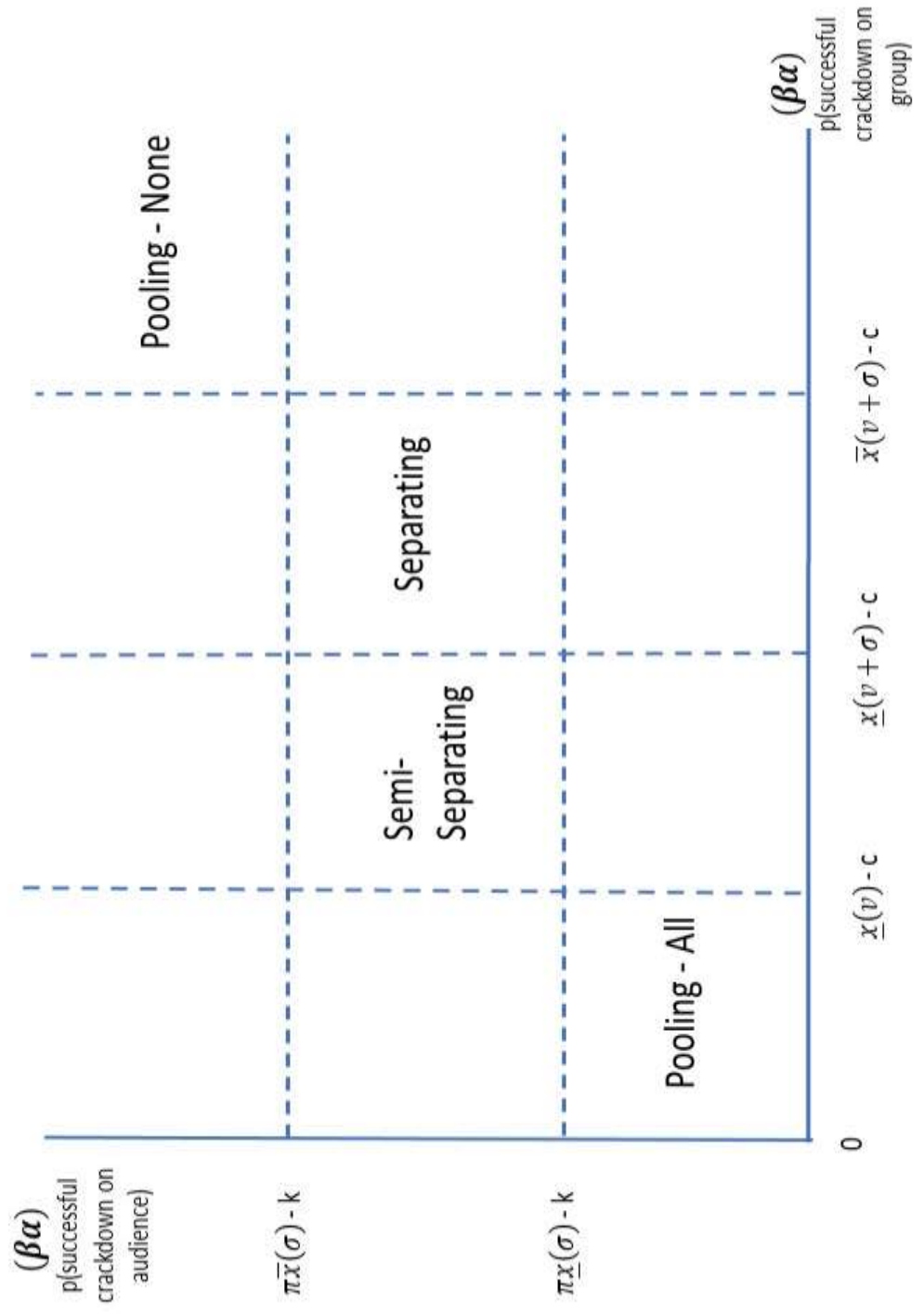

Figure 2: Equilibrium Space

Across the horizontal axis, *G* must be willing to pay a higher baseline cost in order to pledge, such that the highest costs are farthest away from the origin. Moving up the vertical axis, *A* needs to be willing to endure a higher cost in order to support any *G*. This allows for a characterization of equilibria based on the anticipated costs both *A* and *G* will pay. c and k are intrinsically interlinked—*G* only wants to pay the cost of pledging if it anticipates support. *A* only wants to pay to support an expanded *G* whose goals are in line with their own. Pledging serves as a way for *G* to signal these expanded goals. Ultimately, the threat of a crackdown, β, influences the costs both groups are willing to endure. Below, I discuss the separating and semi-separating equilibria, as those allow for pledging to serve as a distinctive signal.

Proposition 1: semi-separating

When $\underline{x}(v+\sigma) \geq c + \beta\alpha \geq \underline{x}(v)$ *and* $\pi\overline{x}(\sigma) \geq k + \beta\alpha \geq \pi\underline{x}(\sigma)$*, the following strategies constitute a Perfect Bayesian Equilibrium (PBE). If expanded type, G pledges. If local type, G pledges with probability r* and ~pledge with probability 1-r*. If G ~pledges, A believes Φ'=0 and ~ support. If G pledges, A believes Φ'=μ and supports with probability f*, while ~support with probability 1-f*.*

Proposition 1 outlines the strategies that constitute the semi-separating equilibrium in Figure 2. The expanded type of *G* always pledges. The local type, though, does so probabilistically, allowing for the possibility of bluffing. A local *G* randomizes between pledging, imitating the expanded types, and revealing its type as local by not pledging. This renders *A* indifferent over supporting when it observes a pledge. If it does not observe a pledge, it knows the group is local so it does not support. But a pledge means either *G* was expanded for certain or a local *G* bluffed in order to get support. While *A* will adjust its prior belief that *G* is

expanded upwards, it cannot be positive. Thus, it randomizes between support and no support to ensure that the local type of *G* will also randomize, rather than all types of *G* pledging.

Because *A* finds it more difficult to judge *G's* type by its action, it cannot know how desirable lending its support to *G* will be. This equilibrium exists in a middling range of c. The costs of pledging are not too high that it eliminates any bluffing local *G*, but not too low that all *G* pledge. While on average *A's* support will go to an expanded type of *G*, *A* may also find itself supporting local types that it does not want to or not supporting the expanded types that it does want to. Thus *A* is willing to pay a middling cost of k—not too low that they support all *G* that pledge, but not too high that they pay too much to support a local *G*. Because *A* already has higher belief that *G* is the expanded type if it pledges, altering the expectation of a successful crackdown, β, can change the incentives of each type to pledge.

Remark 1: The greater the risk of a successful crackdown, β, a lower cost, c, is needed to render local G indifferent to pledging ($\frac{\delta c}{\delta \beta} < 0$).

If the cost is too high, the local G simply won't pledge. Thus, increasing β makes it less likely that local types will join. Expanded type, contrarily, are still willing to pledge at higher values of c. This means pledging can still be used as a signal of type. The separating equilibrium, on the other hand, serves as a perfect signal to *A* of *G's* type, as only expanded types of *G* will pledge.

Proposition 2: separating

When $\overline{x}(v+\sigma) \geq c + \beta\alpha \geq \underline{x}(v+\sigma)$ and $\pi\underline{x}(\sigma) \leq k + \beta\alpha \leq \pi\overline{x}(\sigma)$, the following strategies constitute a PBE. G pledges if it expanded type and ~pledge if it is the local type. If G pledges, A believes it is the expanded type, Φ'=1, and supports. If G ~pledge, A believes it is the local type, Φ'=0, and ~support.

Proposition 2 characterizes a separating equilibrium, which exists at higher values of c than the semi-separating. In this part of the parameter space, *G* can use pledging as a costly signal to *A.* Because *G's* signal is costly, it can count on *A's* support after it pledges. This differs from pooling equilibrium in which no groups pledge, shown in proposition 4, in which the costs of pledging can deter both types of *G* from pledging. Here, though, the expanded type of *G* is so invested in gaining the support of *A,* it is willing to pledge at much higher costs than the local type. This higher cost is what separates the expanded and local types. Once pledged, *A* knows *G* is the expanded type that it wants to support, so it is willing to pay a higher cost, k. Thus, this equilibrium exists in the top right corner of the parameter space, where both c and k are the highest.

Here, pledging serves as the most credible signal. Only types of *G* willing to endure the highest levels of costs, c, are willing to pledge. Thus, *A,* is willing to support at higher levels of k. This willingness to endure costs also shifts in the value of β, or the expectation of a successful crackdown after a pledged *G* gets support from *A.*

Remark 2: The greater the risk of a successful crackdown, β, a lower cost, c, is needed for any G to pledge ($\frac{\delta c}{\delta \beta} < 0$)

Increasing the probability of a successful crackdown lowers the costs that an expanded *G* and *A* will endure. If they expect that there is a reasonably large chance that a crackdown will hinder their chances of achieving their goal, $\overline{\chi}$, then both are less willing to pledge or support. Thus, as crackdown potential rises, only groups and audiences that are willing or strong enough to endure and pay the costs will pledge or send support. While this equilibrium perfectly signals *G's* type, the pooling equilibria in Propositions 3 and 4 exemplify when pledging cannot be used to signal on the equilibrium path.

Proposition 3: pooling – all pledge

When $c + \beta\alpha \leq \underline{x}(v + \sigma)$ *and* $k + \beta\alpha \leq \pi\underline{x}(\sigma)$*, the following strategies constitute a PBE.*

Both types of G pledge. If G pledges, A believes Φ'= Φ and supports. If G ~pledge, A believes Φ''=1 and ~support.

Proposition 4: pooling – none pledge

When $c + \beta\alpha \geq \overline{x}(v + \sigma)$ *and* $k + \beta\alpha \geq \pi\overline{x}(\sigma)$*, the following strategies constitute a PBE.*

Neither types of G pledge. If G ~pledges, A believes Φ'= Φ and ~support. If G pledges, A believes Φ''=1 and supports.

Propositions 3 and 4 represent strategies in which *G* pledges or ~pledge, regardless of type. These types of equilibria do not give a sufficient signal. The cost of pledging delineates these equilibria—if it is low enough, all groups will pledge. If it is high enough, none will. Because *A* is acting deterministically, regardless of *G's* type, they place less importance on their valuation of k—it simply cannot be too high. In proposition 3, if *G* ~pledge (an action off the equilibrium path), *A* knows it to be local and ~support. In proposition 4, if *G* pledges, *A* knows it to be expanded and supports. In both cases, *A* may take an action it regrets – support a local *G* or ~support an expanded *G*. It is willing to do so because it believes the difference between these groups is small, so it is willing to take an undesirable action occasionally in order to save the off-equilibrium path costs.

Remark 3: As the alignment of goals, π*, G has with A and the parent organization* $rises$*, A is willing to provide higher costs, k, in support* $(\frac{\delta k}{\delta \pi,} > 0)$

As the degree of goal alignment, π, tightens or approaches 1, the probability of the audience (and thus the parent organization) achieving their goal increases. Thus, the audience is willing to pay a higher cost, k, towards achieving this goal. This is represented by a willingness

to endure more to send more resources to groups who demonstrate they are committed to the goals of the parent organization.

This can be for several reasons. For example, a tighter alignment of goals could indicate that the parent organization will endorse or validate the pledging group, encouraging the audience to support them as well. This was the case with AQI, as discussed in the introduction. After AQI pledged and made clear their goals aligned with the core al-Qaeda platform, bin Laden stated, "We ask God to accept this unity and bless it and for all to know, the dear mujahed brother Abu Musab al-Zarqawi is the prince of al Qaeda in Iraq, so we ask all our organization brethren to listen to him and obey him in his good deeds" (CNN 2004). This marked the moment when AQI got access to al-Qaeda's worldwide network of resources.

2.1.3 Discussion

It is puzzling why political violence groups pledge allegiance to a parent organization. There are uneven direct benefits from the parent organization—groups don't always get financing or technology due to the clandestine nature of terrorism or governments often deny any relationship with a militia. Yet the costs are severe. After pledging, groups must align their actions and goals with the parent organization. They become involved in the international community's crackdown efforts against the larger brand. For example, al-Qaeda and ISIS recruits get placed on the UN's 1267 list, rendering travel bans, financial freezes and the authorization of military force against them. Militias in Kashmir were targets of Indian and UN troops. Moreover, why does this broader base audience lend their support to the group if they also are targets of this crackdown?

Pledging can serve as a costly signal of the group's type. If both the groups and the audience know that a crackdown looms, only the more committed type should pledge. This is

the type of group with expanded goals. These goals range beyond their region or specific ideology. It is these groups that stand to benefit the most from pledging and are thus most likely to bear the costs of a crackdown in order to increase their likelihood of obtaining their goal by gaining the support of the audience. The group can gain support from an audience because, once pledged, they join the larger brand of a parent organization and can pull from this existing, broader audience that follows the goals of the parent organization.

There two types of equilibrium in which pledging exists as this type of signal. In a separating equilibrium, pledging serves as a perfect signal of type. It exists at higher values of the cost of pledging and the cost of supporting, which is intuitively in line with the costly signal theory I outline. Paying the higher cost shows an expanded group's commitment, thus making an audience willing to pay a higher cost to support. The looming crackdown can influence these tolerances, with an increase in the probability of a successful crackdown making it more difficult to find low enough costs that an expanded group or audience are willing to pay. In the semi-separating equilibrium, an expanded type always pledges but the local type does so probabilistically. The costs of pledging are not too high to deter local groups from bluffing. Because the audience knows this, they also support probabilistically.

The Pooling equilibrium, on the other hand, represent scenarios in which pledging (or not) does not provide a signal. If all or no groups pledge, the audience cannot use their actions to differentiate among the two types of groups. Chapter 6 specifically examines the effects of pledging when it no longer serves as a signal, because "all" have pledged rendering the market overcrowded. Groups must then utilize further actions, such as raising the profile of their attacks, in order to send a costly signal to the audience.

2.2 EMPIRICAL IMPLICATIONS

Signaling Equilibria

The model has interesting implications which shed light on both when we should expect groups to pledge, as well as when we should expect affiliated groups to receive support. As found in both Remark 1 and Remark 2, as the likelihood of a successful crackdown (β) after pledging increases, the costs, c, groups are willing to endure must be lower in order for them to pledge. This is evident in Figure 2 above. As costs along the X-axis rise, groups become increasingly less likely to affiliate. When costs are at their lowest (near 0), a pooling equilibrium in which all groups will affiliate exists. When costs are at their highest, a pooling equilibrium in which no groups will affiliate exists. Separating equilibria exist in the middling range. In general, we should expect costs to matter when groups affiliate or not. Thus, we have the straightforward expectation that costs affect the decision to pledge, such that:

Hypothesis 1*: The more likely it is a successful crackdown against the political violence group occurs, the less likely the groups are to affiliate*

Intuitively, from the model, groups with expanded goals should be most likely to affiliate because this is the signal. Groups with state-level goals are more likely than local groups to affiliate, while groups with regional or international goals are the most likely to affiliate. Groups anticipate receiving support when they can signal their commitment to the parent organization's expanded goals. However, because of the incentive to bluff, it may not be tenable to use the stated goal type of each group as a reliable predictor of affiliation. Groups have an incentive to lie and state they have expanded goals in order to get these resources from the audience of the parent organization, when they will really pursue their own local goals.

Instead, the actual actions of the groups can be leveraged to assess this intuition. In general, as costs increase, groups are less likely to pledge. However, as these costs increase,

more information about the type of group pledging is gathered. From Figure 2, at low group costs, all types will pledge, rendering no information about their type. As group costs increase, we observe a semi-separating equilibrium that begins to separate out types. Only some local groups will be able to bluff. As group costs continue to increase, we observe a separating information that provides the most information about the type of group pledging. Only the expanded types will pledge at the higher costs. Because, at higher costs, affiliation can be used as a signal (as opposed to low costs when all groups will pledge, even if bluffing about their type), we should expect expanded groups to be the most likely to endure these high costs and send the affiliation signal. Thus:

Hypothesis 2*:* *Given a group has affiliated, they are more likely to be the expanded type (have a broad goal) than non-affiliate groups. This is particularly true as the potential for a successful crackdown increases*

Key Mechanisms

A key mechanism that drives the model is that pledging is a costly signal. Then, the parent organization's base audience will support affiliate groups who can send this costly signal, supplying them with new and valuable resources. From the formal model, the associated crackdown against affiliate groups is a key parameter of the model that ultimately drives a large part of the results. More directly, this maps onto the parameters β and α in the model, or the probability (β) that a group will pay the costs (α) of a successful international or governmental crackdown against them after their profile raises with the act of pledging. The willingness of affiliate groups to incur these costs associated with potential backlash is what makes their signal of pledging credible, as it reveals them as an expanded type of group that will help advance the goals of the parent organization.

But is there an actually threat of backlash once pledged? I utilize a randomized survey experiment of public opinion on foreign policy issues, detailed in Chapter 3, to assess the validity of this mechanism. In other words, when a group has pledged to a parent organization, respondents should want to spend more money or commit more troops or police to countering that group if the threat of backlash exists. This is based on literature from South Asia that shows, on average across countries as a whole, there exists only moderate levels of overall support for militant groups (Blair et al. 2013; Fair et al. 2014; Blair et al. 2014; Bullock et al. 2011). Thus, we should expect the average citizen to favor a baseline of counter-violence spending as part of the foreign policy. If pledging influences the level of potential crackdown, we should expect affiliate groups to encounter even higher levels of preferred counter-political violence activity than non-affiliated groups. I hypothesize that when subjects receive information that a group is affiliated with a parent organization, they will support higher levels of monetary and personnel-commitment counter-violence initiatives, such that:

HYPOTHESIS 3: *When groups are affiliated with a parent organization, there is more counter-violence support from the public than when groups are unaffiliated*

The second aspect of the formal model to explore further is the part of the costly signal mechanism that assumes the audience of the parent organization is supporting a group that pledged because they observe this costliness. If observed, the group has successfully signaled their type. Again, because the group was willing to risk a crackdown from the international community, the audience assumes they are (most likely) an expanded type of group. Thus, the audience and group's ideology should align, making the group a type which the audience wishes to support.

Further outlined in Chapter 3, I utilize an endorsement experiment to gauge under what conditions supporters may be willing to send these resources. I oversampled conflict zones in these countries and gave a battery of questions to judge respondents baseline support for political violence before offering the treatment of affiliation or no affiliation to assess its effect on willingness to provide support. While baseline levels of support for militancy is relatively low, there is evidence that it is significantly higher in conflict zones in South Asia (Fair et. al 2014).

As the alignment of goals increases, the costs the audience is willing to endure in order to offer support increases. Thus, if the audience receives the costly signal, they should be most willing to support. They believe the alignment to be close, or they believe the group to have expanded goals that match the parent organization:

Hypothesis 4: *If a group pledged and there is a potential for a successful crackdown, the more likely the parent organization's audience is to support the affiliate group*

Non-signaling Equilibria

As evidenced by the pooling equilibrium, sometimes affiliation doesn't provide significant information to the parent brand's audience. When a larger number of eligible groups align with a parent organization, the audience still cannot differentiate among them. Affiliation was not a strong enough signal. Thus, affiliate groups must utilize other mechanisms to differentiate themselves and ultimately gain support. I test this implication of the model utilizing all pledged and potential affiliate groups of al-Qaeda. The brand which generates a broad base of supporters is Salafi-Jihadist Islam, which most often associated with the core of al-Qaeda. Since 2001, al-Qaeda has formally accepted affiliates who follow their specific form of Salafi jihadism.

Throughout the early 2000's, the crackdown costs imposed on al-Qaeda pledges were very high. The UN 1267 sanctions regime was adopted to punish all individuals and groups associated with bin Laden. In particular, the goal was to pressure these affiliates to ultimately turn over bin Laden to US or UN authorities. Between these mandatory financial and travel-based sanctions, and the US-led coalitions wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, pledging was indeed very costly. AQI bears evidence to this fact. Indeed, during the years immediately after 2001, fewer groups pledged to al-Qaeda, seen below in Figure 1. This falls in line with the theory that only truly committed groups willing to pay high costs should pledge as a costly signal.

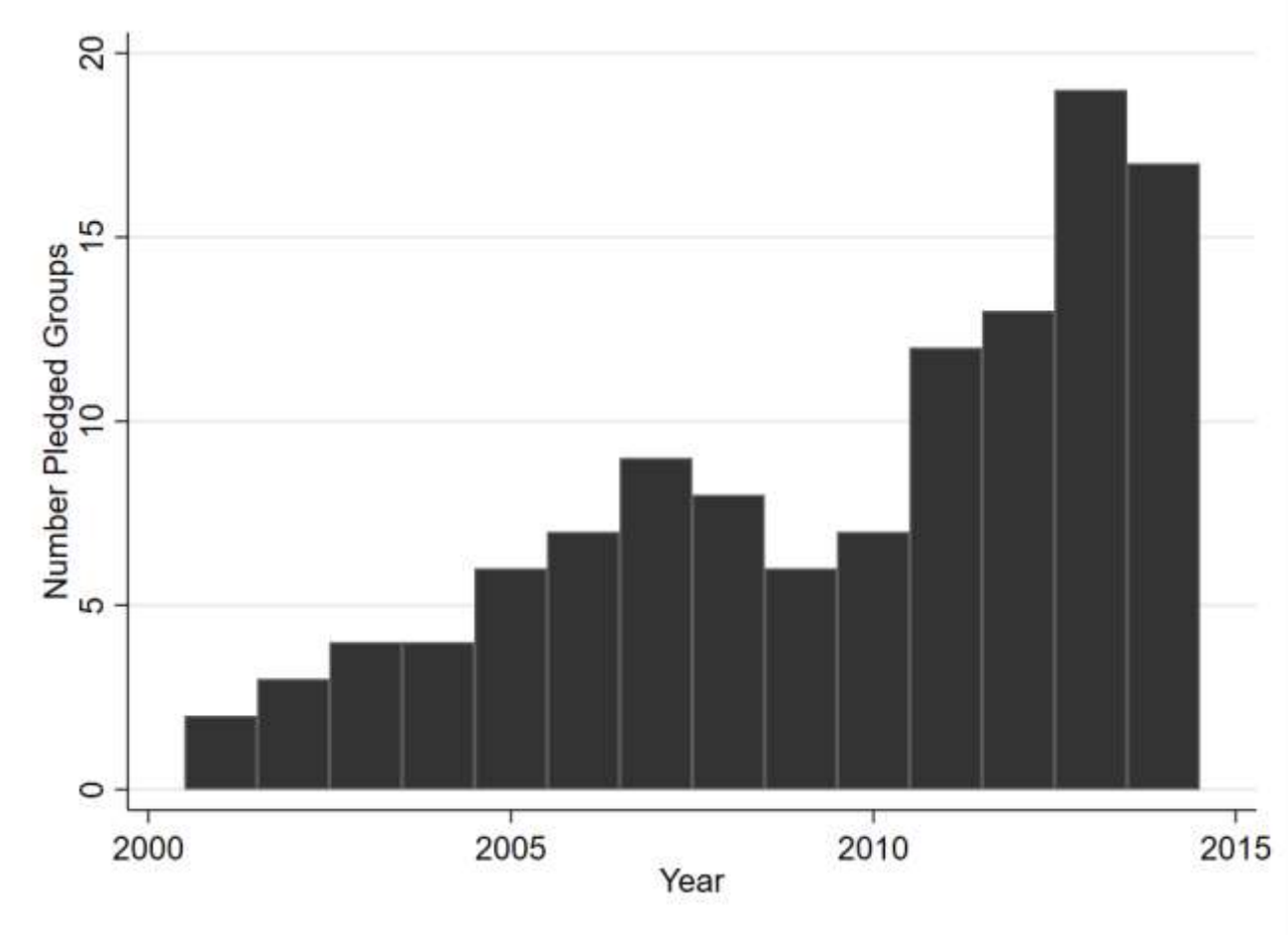

Figure 3: al-Qaeda Pledged Groups by Year

Yet, after bin Laden was killed in 2011 and ISIS started accepting pledges in 2013, the costs imposed on al-Qaeda affiliates lowered substantially with ther UN's attention split between multiple groups and the US-coalition pulling troops out of previous warzones (Hashim 2014). With the costs low, we observe the pledging patterns fall more in line with a pooling equilibrium. As evidenced in Figure 1, starting in 2011, there was a sharp increase in the number of al-Qaeda pledges. Not facing high costs, groups could pledge more readily. The marketplace of al-Qaeda pledges has become crowded. Indeed, in 2013, 19 groups were pledged a parent organization, compared to two the year after al-Qaeda began accepting affiliates.

So while pledging forms this potential for new resources by providing the necessary baseline verification that these groups follow and are committed to the desirable brand of al-Qaeda or ISIS, potential supporters must still decide which exact group to back. Logically, outbidding provides a way for affiliates to show their worth compared to other groups they know have pledged. They can do this by increasing their visibility to potential supporters through escalated attacks.

Outbidding occurs when a multiplicity of terrorist groups is present within a single state and must simultaneously vie for the same sources of support. In order to gain support from domestic civilians, they must utilize increasing levels of attacks in order to differentiate themselves from other groups and gain a market share of support (Bloom, 2005). Empirical support for this theory, however, has always been mixed (Crenshaw, 1985; Chenoweth, 2010; Findley & Young, 2012a; Nemeth, 2013; Conrad & Greene, 2015). Here, I examine the transnational nature of outbidding in the context of terrorism. Ideologies, such as religion, have been found to generate competition among groups trying to win their civil wars. (Toft, 2007, 2013; Breslawski & Ives, 2018). I argue shared ideology can also generate competition

transnationally among terrorist groups. Groups across the globe that share the same ideology can further compete for resources, such as foreign fighters or funding, from non-state actors across international borders.

For example, ISIS affiliates in the Philippines have outbid other affiliates, propelling their recent violence into an increase in valuable foreign fighters. ISIS affiliates temporarily overtook the city of Marawi in 2017, 'showing off a capability that few other ISIS branches have achieved' (Postings, 2018). Since the battle for Marawi, the ISIS affiliate in the Philippines has received over 100 foreign fighters from 16 different countries, a rate much higher than other affiliates. Officials posit the Philippines is now an attractive home for foreign fighters because of this increased violence, stating 'the actual fighting is still ongoing presently in [the Philippines] gives them a sense of purpose' (Yusa, 2018). As expected, supporters of the ISIS-specific brand send resources to the affiliate group that distinguished themselves as the most capable over other groups in this competitive arena.

al-Qaeda groups who have exhibited the most capability in conflict theatres such as Syria, Iraq, and Yemen have gotten the most external resources. Potential funders and fighters can observe the leading groups and wish to send resources to these most visible groups. The leading groups even draw trained fighters from other groups who wish to join the best affiliates, as they both make the most impact in achieving the brand's goals (Lin et al., 2013). This has influenced the actions and violence of groups who perceive themselves as underfunded, as they seek to catch up. There is a geostrategic market, in which affiliate groups must demonstrate capability in order to draw the top resources, which this brand gives them access to, into their own group and conflict theatre.

Therefore, we can leverage this particular sample of pledged groups to more directly measure competition, or the number of pledged groups. As the costs of affiliation lower starting in 2011, the number of groups willing to pledge will rise as we approach a pooling equilibrium. In this state, pledging no longer serves as a costly signal. Thus we should expect pledged groups to need to send an additional signal to potential supporters. Following the traditional outbidding literature, we should expect:

Hypothesis 5: *When the costs of pledging lessen starting in 2011, pledged groups commit more attacks as competition rises*

Beyond a greater quantity of violence in general, outbidding groups may change the quality of their attacks. Needing to differentiate when multiple groups compete for the same market share of support, groups can increase the shock value of their attacks. More spectacular attacks garner more media coverage (Scott, 2001; Weimann & Winn, 1994). Media coverage allows groups to speak to a wider audience and use their attacks to convey their message (Hoffman, 2006). In a crowded marketplace, these spectacular attacks serve as an efficient way for groups to differentiate.

There are several ways to measure spectacular attacks. Suicide terrorism has often been used as one operationalization. The shock value of a perpetrator's willingness to die for the cause communicates group's disposition to escalate violence in order to prove their credibility and capabilities (Bloom, 2005). As groups continue to pledge, we should expect groups to use suicide terror as they outbid one another for support:

Hypothesis 6*: When the costs of pledging lessen starting in 2011, pledged groups commit more suicide attacks as competition rises*

Yet, suicide attacks are relatively rare. A group looking to ratchet up the intensity of attacks may do so in other ways, which would not be reflected in data on suicide attacks. In addition to the traditional measure of suicide attacks as a shock value, groups can vary the severity of their target selection. A target against infrastructure will generate less shock value than an attack against civilians, for example. Additionally, groups can vary the severity of their attack type. Attacks that generate no physical danger, such as unarmed assaults, will generate less shock value than attacks that are violent, such as bombings or assassinations (Conrad & Greene, 2015). As groups continue to pledge, we should expect their attacks to escalate in severity:

Hypothesis 7: *When the costs of pledging lessen starting in 2011, pledged groups commit more severe attacks as competition rises*

CHAPTER 3

3. Research Design

3.1 PREDICTING PLEDGING

Data Set

According to the theory, groups should affiliate when that act can send a costly signal. In order to test these hypotheses, I first gathered a sample of 367 militia, terrorist, and rebel groups which operated in the South Asian countries of Afghanistan, Pakistan and India from 1970 through 2015. The unit of analysis is group-year. First, the network of horizontal alliances among these groups was compiled using a broad array of sources (see: SATP, TOPS, UCDP, BAAD, TRAC). From this network, the population of vertical alliances was generated. Each group in the sample was individually researched utilizing group profiles and news reports to determine if their alliance with another group was merely horizontal or that of an affiliate and a parent organization. Below is the distribution of groups by type (Terrorist, Rebel, Militia, or a Hybrid), broken down by country. In general, one type of group or one country does not dominate the sample.

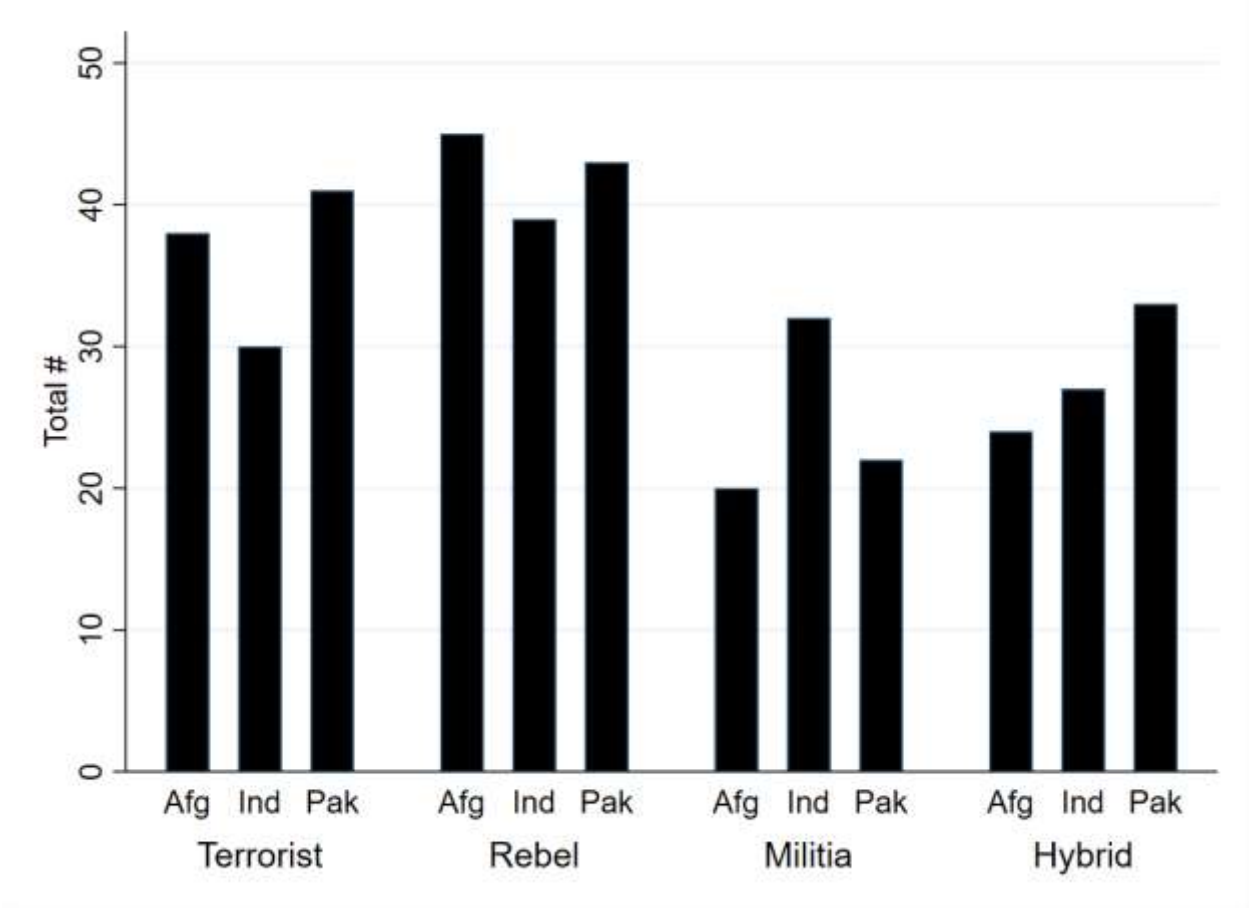

Figure 4: Groups by Type and Country

Dependent Variables

Hypothesis 1 states: *The more likely it is a successful crackdown against the political violence group occurs, the less likely the groups are to affiliate*

Affiliates are part of a vertical alliance in which a parent organization is present. The coding is based on both the group's actions and words. While announcing a pledge to a parent organization in the media is oftentimes observable, groups can still be affiliates in the absence of this formality when resources, such as fighters, financing, and training, clearly flow only one way from the parent to the affiliate.

Affiliate: The dependent variable for Hypothesis 1, called *Affiliate*, is a dichotomous variable in which 0 indicates a group was not affiliated with a parent organization in that given year, and 1 indicates a group was affiliated. Groups can affiliate then dis-affiliate while still remaining in the dataset.

A parent organization must meet two main criteria: be a recognized entity capable of having both a brand (a set of expanded goals it follows) and of being sanctioned. This means a parent organization differs from what is often delineated an "umbrella organization," under which many groups operate. These umbrella organizations often do not have a leader, do not have members of their own, and are not a physical entity which could be targeted in a crackdown.

While this criterion is easy to meet with a parent organization such as al-Qaeda, which has its own unique group with an ideology that defines its expanded goals and is sanctioned in their own right, some may question if parent organizations exist outside this narrow Salafi Jihadist ideology. One of many examples exists with The United Liberation Front of Western South East Asia (UNLFW), operating in India. With 11 affiliates, this group has the expanded goal to fight for the right of sovereignty for all Indian tribes. Groups affiliating with the UNLFW put aside their local separatist goals to fight for this general right to sovereignty amongst all of India. The UNLFW have subsequently been sanctioned under the Armed Powers Special Forces Act in India since 2015 (Kalita 2015).

Affiliate groups must make some public declaration of support for a parent organization. For example, the People's War Group (PWG), located in India, made a formal declaration of affiliation with the Coordination Committees of Maoist Parties and Organizations (CCOMPOSA) in 2001, putting forth a news report. The CCOMPOSA parent organization

aimed to install leftist governments across India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. Upon affiliation, the PWG got access to new financial channels and new training, as the CCOMPOSA coordinated with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) of Sri Lanka (SATP 2018). Below is the distribution of the total # of groups affiliated, again broken down by type and group.

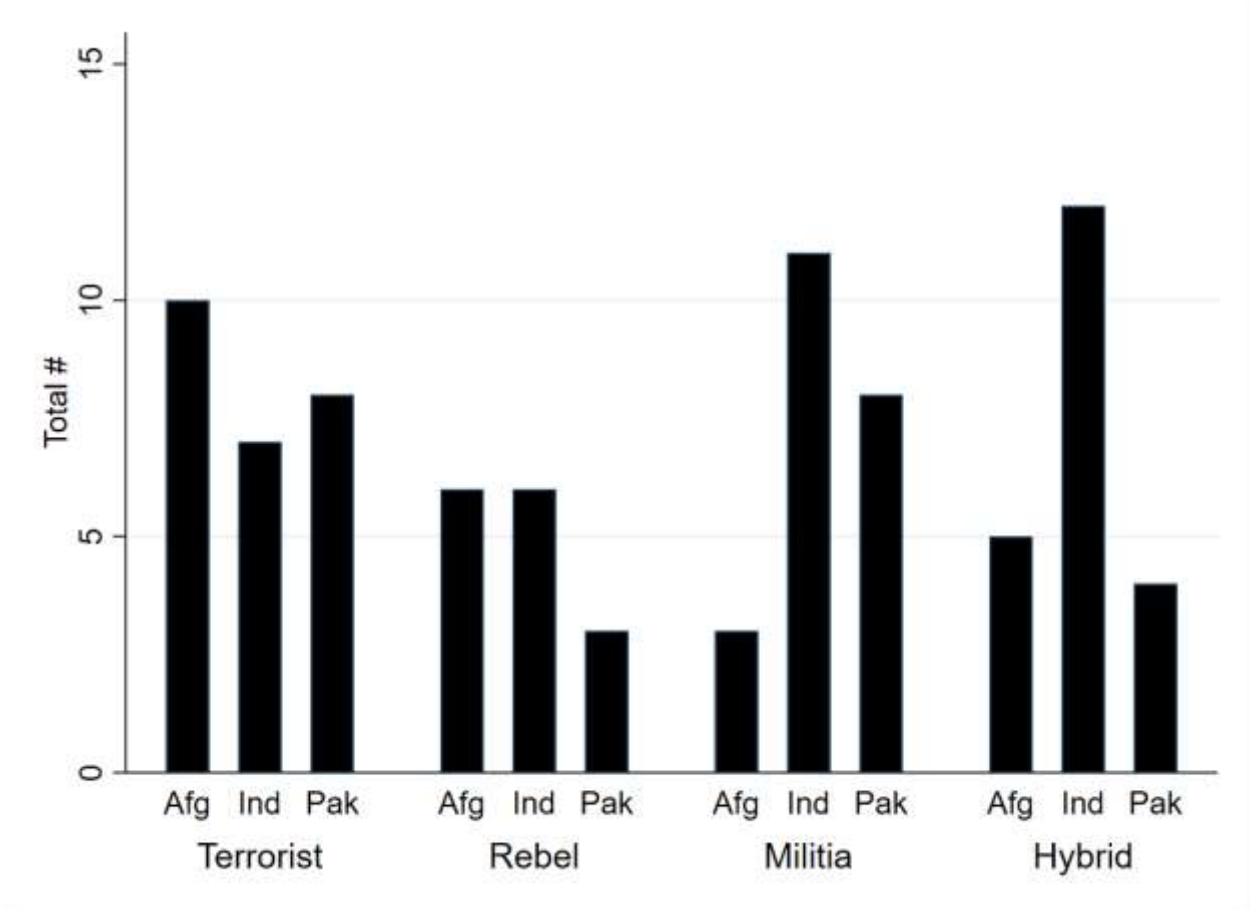

Figure 5: Affiliated Groups by Type and Country

Hypothesis 2 states***:*** *Given a group has affiliated, they are more likely to be the expanded type (have a broad goal) than non-affiliate groups. This is particularly true as the potential for a successful crackdown increases*

Hypothesis 2 predicts affiliate groups will be more likely to be an expanded type, particularly at higher costs when the signal they send by affiliation is costly. They should have larger goals that better align with the parent organization.

Goal Type: A categorical variable in which a group's stated or pursued goal in observation can be a local, state, regional or international goal. This variable was coded while reading group profiles and news reports, based on their statements and actions. A local goal is group-centric. A state or regional goal occurs when the group has aims outside their own locality. An international goal is global in nature.

Explanatory Variables

According to Hypothesis 1, the expected potential of a crackdown dictates when groups will pledge to a parent organization. The explanatory variables thus capture an expectation of crackdown costs to the group. I utilize different domestic measures of potential successful crackdown aimed to explain different aspects of government's ability to sanction groups: military capacity, denying external support, governance quality and Political Terror Score, which represents current repression by the government. I further utilize measurements of international costs: troops and foreign aid.

Domestic Costs:

Military Expenditure: First, the quality of military should be correlated with the ability of a government to crackdown on terrorist or rebel groups. This variable is a measure of a country's military expenditure divided by their GDP in any given year. Country's with a higher military expenditure should be expected to fare better in counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency missions. All military variables are generated from the Correlates of War dataset (Singer 1987).

Deny External Support: Second, states ability to deny external support to terrorist and rebel groups should further be expected to correlate with a successful crackdown. From the supply side, terrorist and rebel groups are typically at a resource disadvantage compared to the state. If they could get these resources from an external state, they shouldn't be expected to be as likely to pledge to get additional resources. More directly related to a crackdown, from the demand side, external states will often provide support to terrorists and rebel groups to destabilize these group's home state at a cheaper cost to the external state. If this external support is absent, home states should be more stable and better equipped to fight off these groups (Salehyan et all 2011). This variable, *Deny Support*, is a dichotomous variable coded as 0 if a group received any external state support and a 1 if they received no external state support. (Byman 2012; Högbladh et al 2011, UCDP 2015, EDTG 2019).

Tax/GDP: Hendrix (2010) offers a different way to measure bureaucratic capacity, through a tax to GDP ratio. This captures the ability of a state to extract revenue. Higher ability to extract this revenue suggests better bureaucratic, and thus governance, quality. *Tax/GDP* is a measure of the percentage of tax per GDP in each country. Both governance variables are generated from World Bank data (World Bank 2018).

Political Terror Scale: The PTS measures levels of political violence and terror that a country experiences in a particular year based on a 5-level "terror scale," with 5 being widespread abuses by the state (Wood & Gibney 2010). States actively engaged in violence against factions of their own state should be able to better crackdown on affiliate groups.

International costs:

Governments have a latent ability to impose costs on violent groups operating within their own country, as measured with the proxies presented above which represent the general ability to efficiently impose force. They also have a willingness to do so, as they need to remain legitimate authorities. International costs are less uniform. They tend to be more context dependent and require a much higher level of coordination in which states choose to impose force. Accordingly, measures of international costs tend to be much more noisy than domestic data. Rather than universal international costs, I present measures that are specific both contextually and temporally.

US Troops: Measures a count of US troops stationed. The more troops, the costlier the potential crackdown. This measure is only applied to groups operating in Afghanistan from 2001 through 2015 and is drawn from the "Boots on the Ground" monthly reports to Congress (CRS 2017; Kane 2012).

US Troops Present: Is a dummy variable, with 1 representing the presence of US troops in a conflict context, rather than as part of normal basing operations. These two variables are specific to Afghanistan.

US Aid and International Aid: Measures the amount of aid in US$ distributed yearly, both from the US specifically and a total of all International aid (AidData 2016). For example, the United States distributes this aid contingent on Pakistani guarantees to combat terrorism and insurgency in the country, as well as allows the United States to operate drones within Pakistan's borders. When Pakistan fails on its end, the amount of aid is adjusted, evidenced as recently as 2018 (Ward, 2018). This measurement of international costs is utilized for the full sample.

Controls

War: Measurement of major episodes of political violence, defined by the systematic and sustained use of lethal violence by organized groups that result in at least 500 directly-related deaths over the course of the episode (The Center for Systemic Peace 2018).

Population: measures the logged population of a state. Large populations may present a more difficult environment for governments to monitor and enforce anti-terrorism policies.

GDPpc: Governance quality is often used as a proxy measurement for a state's ability to carry out counter-terrorist or counter-insurgency missions. Though often contended, GDP per capita serves as a proxy measurement of bureaucratic and administrative capacity within a state. As Fearon and Laitin (2003) argue, "the fundamental fact about insurgency is that insurgents are weak relative to the governments they are fighting, at least at the start of operations. If government forces knew who the rebels were and how to find them, they would be fairly easily destroyed or captured. This is true even in states whose military and police capacities are low." States with a higher GDP per capita are often better able to manage information needed to crackdown on these groups.

Trade: measures the total trade to account for the economic determinants of terrorism.

GDPpc, *Population* and *Trade* are measured according to World Bank Indicators (World Bank, 2014).[7]

Polity: denotes the current regime type on a 21-point scale. Polity values <-5 are autocratic, Polity values >5 are democratic and Polity values in the middle are anocratic.

[7] Afghanistan is missing GDP data from 1982 through 2000. Imputed data was used in the main analysis, with these years being dropped from the sample in the Appendix. Results remain consistent.

Type: measures the type of group—Rebel, Terrorist, Militia, or Hybrid—based on the presence of each group in the key data sets (UCDP, GTD, PGM).

Age and *Age2:* represent the time the group has been operating since 1970, in years.

Splinter: A dichotomous measure accounting for the origin of a group, coded in conjunction with the *Affiliation* variable.

Alliances: taken from the Phillips (2019) and Horowitz and Potter (2014) dataset, this variable is a count of the number of alliances each given group has in a given year.

Cold War and 9/11: Temporal dummies to capture the regional interest of the United States and other Great Powers in regional conflict

Estimation Strategy

Because the *Affiliate* variable is dichotomous, I utilize a logistic regression model when testing Hypothesis 1. The coefficients represent the change in the log-odds of Affiliation occurring. When testing Hypothesis 2, I utilize a multinomial logit. This model compares the probabilities that different independent variables will result in each respective outcome. The choice to affiliate is analyzed at varying levels of potential crackdown to assess the probability of a group having an expanded or broad goal, compared to a local goal.

Estimating fixed effects in nonlinear models can run into the incidental parameter problem (Greene 2002). To avoid bias, I utilize cubic polynomials to account for time dependence (Carter & Signorino 2010). I further provide results with country fixed effects in the Appendix. Results remain widely similar.

3.2 Support for Affiliate Groups: Experiment

According to the theory, political violence groups can use affiliation with a parent organization as a signal that they are willing to incur risks in order to pursue their goals and get

support from a parent organization's supporters. I assume that this signal is costly because once affiliated, the profile of the political violence group raises. This opens them up to the national or international crackdown already experienced by the parent organization. Because potential supporters want to back a capable, driven group that will advance the agenda of the parent organization they follow, affiliation serves as a way for the affiliate group to signal their intentions and gain support and increase their resources from this new, broader pool of supporters.

There are two parts of this theory that deserve further exploration. First, the question of if affiliation is actually a costly signal, in line with Hypothesis 3 which states: *When groups are affiliated with a parent organization, there is more counter- violence support from the public than when groups are unaffiliated.* From the previously developed formal model, the potential crackdown against affiliate groups post-pledging is a key parameter of the model. The willingness of affiliate groups to incur these costs associated with a potential crackdown is what makes their signal of pledging credible. But is there actually a threat of a crackdown once pledged? If pledging influences a possible crackdown inflicted by the government post-affiliation, we should expect affiliate groups to encounter higher levels of potential counter-insurgency activity than non-affiliated groups.

The second aspect of the formal model to explore further is the mechanisms behind the costly signal. The model assumes the audience of the parent organization is supporting a group that pledged because they in fact observe this costliness, rather than other mechanisms such as common ideology. This is in line with Hypothesis 4 which states: *If a group pledged and there is a potential for a successful crackdown, the more likely the parent organization's audience is to support the affiliate group*. To probe these mechanisms, I utilize an endorsement experiment

which presents a policy proposal to respondents and has them rate their level of support. The control group simply rates their support for the policy proposal. The treatment group rates their support for the policy, but is also given information about a group's endorsement of it and their reasons for supporting. More enthusiasm for the policy with a treatment (endorsing) group than the control policy provides evidence that there is latent support for the endorsing group.

Data Collection

The basic set up for this first part of the experiment has 1,060 respondents evenly drawn from the South Asian countries of Pakistan and India.[8] A power analysis utilizing data from the pilot study indicated 118 respondents per group was needed (power = 0.8, $\alpha = 0.05$). Because 4 unique policy proposals were presented, each policy vignette needed 236 respondents at a minimum to ensure no single policy was driving results. Thus, 944 respondents was the minimum.

These countries both have a unique combination of factors which makes them appropriate to study for this question. First, both are democracies. India has a polity score of 9 on a scale of -10 (autocracy) to 10 (democratic), while Pakistan has a score of 7 (Marshall 2018). When testing Hypothesis 3, this experimental design relies on asking citizens about their policy preferences and inferring how those preferences will impact government counterinsurgency and counterterrorism actions. Previous literature has found that in democracies, public opinion affects leaders' actions. Citizens care about foreign policy and policies regarding the use of force. Democratic leaders care about remaining popular and thus electable. Consistent with these facts, many studies have found that public opinion in democracy does indeed affect

[8] The experiment was funded by the University of Texas' Charlie Wilson Chair in Pakistan Studies. It was determined exempt by the University's IRB in July 2018, Study Number: 2018-004-0074. A pilot utilizing 250 Indian respondents via mTurk was undertaken in November, 2018.

government's military and security policies (Tomz and Weeks 2013, Baum 2004; Baum and Potter 2008; Berinsky 2009; Canes-Wrone 2006; Holsti 2004; Reiter and Stam 2002).

Second, both have several ongoing political violence conflicts in which both parent organizations and affiliate groups operate[9]. This is relevant for testing Hypothesis 4, which seeks to determine under what circumstances potential supporters of these groups are willing to give support to affiliate groups. The fact that conflict is prevalent, combined with geographically targeted vignettes in an endorsement experiment (discussed below), gives the best potential chance to contact these potential supporters, who are a generally difficult to access population.

Respondents in India and Pakistan were accessed via Qualtrics Panel, who contracts with local survey firms in order to draw random online samples which meet specific quotas. In this experiment, the quotas were mainly geographic specifications in order to target the policy proposals and potential affiliate groups to relevant audiences. Outlined in more detail below in the discussion of the specific vignettes, citizens located in Northern India (for example) were exposed to treatments that pertained to policies and political violence groups that are active in the Northern India region.

Similar to amazon's mTurk, the survey firms contracted by Qualtrics Panel opened this survey to respondents via a Dashboard in which they could choose to participate. All surveys were administered to respondents 18 years and over in English, as English is an official language in both India and Pakistan. From July 15-22, 2019, respondents were first asked to give their informed consent, then were asked relevant questions about their location and religion (in Northern India). Their location can be verified via IP address. Once a quota was filled, further respondents meeting that quota were terminated. For example, if the Balochistan quota was 125 respondents and 125 respondents from Balochistan had already finished the survey, any further

[9] See: https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-asia

Balochistan-based respondents would not be able to fill out the survey. In total, the survey was open for 6 days in India and 8 days in Pakistan for the quotas to be filled.

Because the policies and affiliate groups presented in the vignettes deal with ongoing political violence incidents, the specific regions in which these conflicts are occurring were oversampled. This helped ensure that that the topics were relevant to respondents and that, to the greatest degree possible, potential supporters of these parent organizations and affiliate groups were represented in the sample. Specifically, the geographic breakdown is as follows:

	Total Respondents	States	Over-Sampled Quotas	Policy Treatment
India (North)	250	Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab and Rajasthan, Union Territories of Delhi, Chandigarh, Goa, Gujarat, Assam, Arunchal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, and Maharashtra	Kashmir and Jammu (125 Muslim Respondents)	Kashmir Violence
India (South)	250	Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Telangana	Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh[10] (164 Respondents)	Naxalite Violence

Table 1: Geographic Quotas in India

	Total Respondents	Provinces	Over-Sampled Quotas	Policy Treatment
Pakistan (South)	250	Punjab, Sindh, Gilgit-Baltistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir	Gilgit-Baltistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (85 Respondents) North Punjab (91 respondents)	Kashmir Violence
Pakistan (North)	250	KPK, Balochistan, Gilgit-Baltistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir	KPK (158 Respondents) Balochistan (19 Respondents)	Durand Line

Table 2: Geographic Quotas in Pakistan

[10] These states are most affected by Naxalite violence

The general demographic breakdown of respondents, compared to the national sample using data from the CIA World Factbook, is as follows:

	Sex (Male)	**Age (25-44 years)**	**Religion**	**Education (College or greater)**	**Political (Center)**
India (Experimental Sample)	62%	74%	62% (Hindu) 33.8% (Islam)	86.6%	67.6%
India (National Sample)	51.5%	63.6%	79.8% (Hindu) 14.2% (Islam)	45% *(Source: AESR)*	72.7%

Table 3: Demographics in India

	Sex (Male)	**Age (25-44 years)**	**Religion**	**Education (College or greater)**	**Political (Center)**
Pakistan (Experimental Sample)	86.4%	47.6%	96.2% (Islam)	43.8%	66.2%
Pakistan (National Sample)	56.2%	53.2%	96.28% (Islam)	15% *(Source: UNESCO)*	76.3%

Table 4: Demographics in Pakistan

In general, males and college educated respondents were overrepresented in both countries. Islamic respondents were over-represented in India, but this was a purposeful over-sampling in the Kashmir and Jammu region. The samples of age brackets and political leanings remain not significantly different than the national data.

The expected bias of oversampling males may be to find more support for political violence, as males tend to join these groups more often. However, support in this experimental

design is purposefully broad (as it is an endorsement design conveying policy support, without explicit mention of how a respondent would support the group), so this bias may be attenuated. The expected bias of oversampling education is less clear. The literature does not have a clear consensus on the affect of education on terrorism or rebel recruitment.

3.2.1 Experimental Design

Vignette 1

Hypothesis 3 states: *When groups are affiliated with a parent organization, there is more counter-violence support from the public than when groups are unaffiliated.* Because directly asking about the questions I am interested in with this experiment—is there (and under what conditions exists) more support for counter political violence investments when a group is aligned with a parent organization—may bias subjects' answers because of reasons such as social desirability, I implement a survey experiment with informational manipulations instead. I am looking for subtle changes in subjects' attitudes towards investments when I link the information provided with a parent organization and its affiliates.

In the basic set up for the first vignette, testing Hypothesis 3, the experiment has all respondents rate their support for counter political violence spending and personnel commitment. Whether the vignette they read includes information about if a group is affiliated with a parent organization is manipulated, with the control group receiving no information about affiliations and the treatment group receiving information about affiliation among groups. In each vignette, the potential parent organization and their ideology or brand was generally well-known to all respondents and was a realistic group that would take on affiliates.

Other manipulations include: ideology of group (religious or leftist) and proximity of group (local to the respondent or not). Each vignette will be followed with questions probing the

individual's familiarity with each group and their baseline levels of counter political violence support.

Vignette 1 Experimental Set-up[11]

An example control vignette in India is:

Every year, the Finance Minister proposes the Union Budget for Parliament to approve. Currently, violent political groups have been in the news for undertaking actions, such as insurgency campaigns and terrorist attacks, which undermine India's interest of promoting peace and development around the world. Accordingly, this year India has an opportunity to alter their current investment amounts in counter-insurgency spending against groups working against India's interests.

Respondents received further information on the type and location of the violence. This information was targeted to respondents based on their geographic location. Respondents in Northern India could be exposed to the following information:

- The violent groups were operating in Jammu and Kashmir region
- The violent groups had an Islamic jihad ideology
- The violent groups origin was India OR Pakistan
- The violent groups were operating with the Parent Organization Lashkar-e-Taiba

An example vignette, with the treatment of affiliation, given to a respondent in Northern India is:

Every year, the Finance Minister proposes the Union Budget for Parliament to approve. Currently, violent political groups have been in the news for undertaking actions, such as insurgency campaigns and terrorist attacks, which undermine India's interest of promoting

[11] See appendix for full factorial design

peace and development around the world. Accordingly, this year India has an opportunity to alter their current investment amounts in counter-insurgency spending against Islamic jihadi Pakistani groups teamed with Lashkar-e-Taiba, working against India's interests in the Jammu and Kashmir region.

Within Southern India, respondents could receive information that:

- The violent groups were operating in the Red Corridor
- The violent groups had a Maoist ideology
- The violent groups origin was India OR China
- The violent groups were affiliated with the Maoist Parent Organization CPI-M

Pakistani respondents were given the baseline vignette:

Every year, the Finance Minister proposes a government budget for President to approve. Currently, violent political groups have been in the news for undertaking actions, such as insurgency campaigns and terrorist attacks, which undermine Pakistan's interest of promoting peace and development around the world. Accordingly, this year Pakistan has an opportunity to alter their current investment amounts in counter-insurgency spending against groups working against Pakistan's interests.

The following geographically targeted informational manipulations were possible, based on if respondents were located in Northern or Southern provinces:

- The violent groups were operating at the Durand Line (North) or in the Jammu and Kashmir region (South)
- The violent groups had an Islamic jihad ideology
- The violent groups origin was India (South) OR Pakistan (North) OR Afghanistan
- The violent groups were affiliated with al-Qaeda

Vignette 1 Dependent Variable

As the key dependent variables, I measured subject's willingness to invest in counter political violence spending in two ways. First, subjects were asked:

> "*How much monetary resources do you believe India should invest in counter-violence spending?"*

Second, they were be asked:

> "*If the option was available, please indicate the level of personnel, such as police or military troops, you believe India should invest in counter-violence efforts?*"

In each case, their answers were recorded on the five-point scale (with an option to not answer):

- 1. Decrease the level of monetary resources [personnel] to none
- 2. Decrease the level of monetary resources [personnel] moderately
- 3. Keep monetary resources [personnel] the same as current levels
- 4. Increase the level of monetary resources [personnel] moderately
- 5. Increase the level of monetary resources [personnel] to the maximum level available in the budget
- Prefer to not answer

Vignette 2

Hypothesis 4 States: *Given a group pledged, when there is a potential for a successful crackdown, the more likely the parent organization's audience is to support the affiliate group.* We often cannot directly observe individual's preference for support because of issues such as social desirability bias, in which individuals do not want to readily admit that they support any militant group. Additionally, non-response rates will often be higher than other questions in the same survey. However, survey experiment designs such as list or endorsement experiments can

help alleviate some of these bias concerns. By indirectly accessing individual's preferences for militancy, these experiment types can increase truthfulness of responses and improve response rates.

The second part of the experiment accesses the subset of the experiment population that indicated low support for counter political violence spending. As stated above, on average, I expect citizens to not support militancy. But accessing the sample that *does* support will allow me to further explore the mechanisms of their support. Previous literature has found that within conflict-affected regions, militancy supports tends to be significant (Fair et al. 2014). Vignette 2 uses an endorsement experiment to verify whether this sample does in fact support militant groups and under what circumstances.[12]

An endorsement experiment presents a policy proposal to respondents and has them rate their level of support. The control group simply rates their support for the policy proposal. The treatment group rates their support for the policy and is given information about a group's endorsement of it. More enthusiasm for the treatment group provides evidence that there is, in general, support for the endorsing group. Successful endorsement experiments have four qualities (Bullock et al. 2011). They propose initiatives in the same policy space, they propose well known initiatives to minimize 'don't know' responses, they pick a realistic endorsement group, and they pick an initiative that has a wide range of views so as to avoid floor or ceiling effects.

Ultimately the goal of the endorsement experiment is to first assess if support for pledged groups really does exist. Secondarily, to probe the mechanisms behind this support. Again, the formal model assumes the audience that potentially offer support will observe a pledge, know it's a costly signal and that probabilistically a group which pledges is more likely to align with

[12] Rosenfeld et al. (2016) found endorsement experiments to yield less bias when compared to list experiments.

the parent organization's goals, and offer their support because of these two factors. This mechanism is different than another proposed method in the literature that could drive support, blind support based on ideology, religion or ethnicity (Lyall et al. 2013).

Vignette 2 Experimental Set-Up

An example baseline control vignette, given to respondents in Northern India, is:

A recent proposal calls for the Indian government to cease its "policy of restraint" along the Line of Control (LoC) in the Kashmir region. As Pakistani security forces and militant groups have increased their presence along the LoC, the Indian government has alleged an uptick in terrorist attacks. New calls have been made for India to engage militarily along the border in response to Pakistani violence.

Respondents in India could receive the following informational manipulations:

- The policy was the "Integrated Action Plan" to leftist Indian parties into India's democratic society (South) OR calls for the Pakistani government to cease its "policy of restraint" along the Line of Control in the Kashmir region (North)
- The proposal was backed by groups working with the Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front (North) OR groups working with the Communist Party of India – Maoist (South)
- These groups have religious (North) OR ideological (South) ties to the region
- The groups could face negative and violent reactions from the government because of their affiliation, but continue to offer support for the proposal.

Pakistani respondents were given the following information:

- The policy was using peace jirgas to resolve disputes along the Durand line (North) OR calls for the Pakistani government to cease its "policy of restraint" along the Line of Control (LoC) in the Kashmir region (South)

- The proposal was backed by groups working with al-Qaeda (North) or==OR Kashmiri Tanzeems (South)
- These groups have religious ties to the region
- The groups could face negative and violent reactions from the government because of their affiliation, but continue to offer support for the proposal.

An example of a treatment vignette, given to respondents in North Pakistan, is:

A recent proposal backed by the Pakistani-based groups working with al-Qaeda has explored using peace jirgas to resolve disputes along the Durand line. As security forces have increased their presence along the Durand line, the Pakistani government has alleged an increase in terrorism attacks. New calls have been made for the Pakistanis to engage in peace jirgas. The groups working with al-Qaeda could face negative and violent reactions from the government because of their affiliation, but continue to offer support for the proposal.

Vignette 2 Dependent Variable

Respondents were asked to answer "*How do you feel about this proposal?"* on a 5-point scale:

- 1. Strongly disagree
- 2. Somewhat disagree
- 3. Neither agree nor disagree
- 4. Strongly agree
- 5. Somewhat agree
- Prefer not to answer

If the mechanism of a costly signal, as I propose, is truly driving the results, I would expect the mean level of support for this policy to be most supported in cases where 1) a

geographically appropriate Parent Organization is the endorsing group and 2) individuals are informed that group may face backlash. Importantly, the Qualtrics Panel allowed me to target specific policies to areas where potential supporters of the group exist. We know the average citizen does not support militants, but by leveraging location where supporters are more likely to exist, I can tease the mechanisms out among those who are more likely to offer support to an affiliate group based on their close proximity to the militants (Fair et. al 2014).

In sum, this experiment will vary information given to subjects in a vignette about India or Pakistan's counter-political violence spending. By manipulating whether the groups are affiliates of a well-known parent organization, I can assess the assumption that pledging is costly because affiliate groups will face backlash. Utilizing an endorsement experimental design, I can separate the mechanisms driving an audience of a parent organization to offer their support to an affiliate group.

Further Questions

After each Dependent Variable question, respondents were asked how familiar they were with both the issue and the group (when applicable). Each question response was a 5-point scale with an option to not answer:

- 1. Strongly disagree
- 2. Somewhat disagree
- 3. Neither agree nor disagree
- 4. Strongly agree
- 5. Somewhat agree
- Prefer not to answer

They were further asked how important they thought the issue was to their country's foreign policy, also answering on a 5-point scale:

1. Not at all important

- 2. Slightly Important
- 3. Important
- 4. Fairly Important
- 5. Very Important
- Prefer to not answer

Respondents were further asked a battery of demographic and opinion questions:[13]

- What is your age in years?
- What is your sex?
- What is the highest class you completed?
- Are you married?
- Were you born in India [Pakistan]?
- Do you currently live in India [Pakistan]?
- In what State [province] do you live?
- What country do you currently live in?
- What language did you grow up speaking?
- Do you have a religious preference?
- How would you describe your financial situation compared to last year at this time?
- Where do you fall on the political spectrum?
- How important is a democratically elected government to you?

[13] See appendix for answer scaling

- How do you feel about the United States' involvement in your government's politics?

Estimation Strategy

A difference-in-means test is used to test the null hypotheses, that there is no difference between groups with no affiliation and groups with an affiliation to a parent organization. A significant difference in the means of the responses between control and treatment groups would indicate support for Hypothesis 3, as measured by increased support for counter political violence spending if a group affiliates, thus making pledging a costly signal[14].

For Hypothesis 4, a significant difference in the means of the responses between policies with no endorsement and policies endorsed by affiliate groups (particularly those facing backlash) indicates potential supporters recognize this costly signal.

3.3 Further Effects on Violence

Data structure

The final empirical chapter examines the effects of affiliation on groups post-affiliation, particularly when affiliation occurs at low costs and does not act as a costly signal. In this case, groups need to further differentiate themselves to garner support. Looking at Salafi-jihadist groups, I examine the effects of affiliation as the number of affiliate groups increases. The unit of analysis is group-month, with 55 groups included in the dataset. This represents all Salafi-jihadist Islamic terrorist groups found in the Global Terrorism Database and subsequently all potential pledges to a parent organization. Figure 1 shows the variation in the number of Salafi groups operating and pledged per year from 2001 to 2014. Overall, 43 groups eventually pledged to al-Qaeda or ISIS, with a maximum of 19 groups pledged at the same time and a

[14] As discussed, conflict areas were oversampled. This may present bias when analyzing the public's opinion on foreign policy. However, I expect the bias to attenuate my expected results.

minimum of two.[15] In general, the number of both Salafi groups and pledged groups goes up as time progresses. However, there exist dips in certain years when Salafi groups ended or when previously pledged groups ceased to exist and other groups did not immediately fill the void. This variation can be leveraged to analyze whether the number of groups does in fact drive individual groups to increase the quantity and severity of their respective attacks per month.

[15] In order to focus on a brand with groups in direct competition, I only test with (potential) al-Qaeda pledges. Because ISIS started accepting pledges much later, only four groups in the sample pledged allegiance to ISIS. These observations of pledged years for these four groups are dropped from the sample.

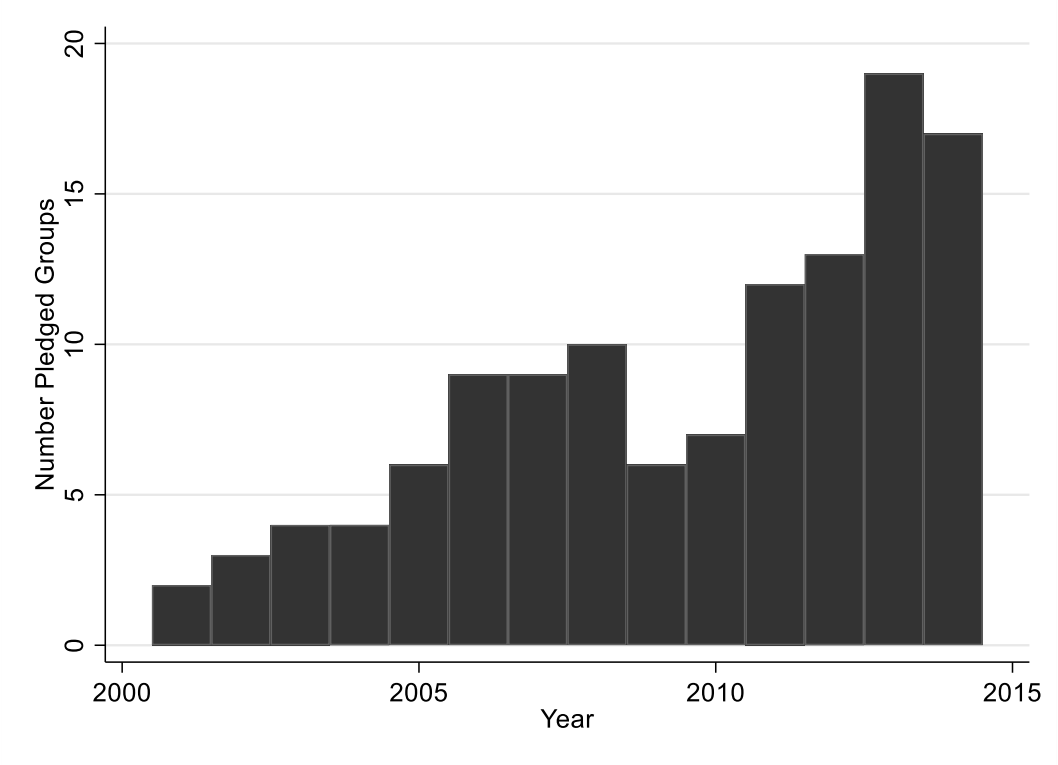

Figure 6: # Pledged groups by Year

Dependent variables

I utilize four total dependent variables to assess each individual hypothesis. Hypothesis 5 predicts more terrorism attacks as competition among pledged groups goes up, during the post-2010 time period when costs of pledging are lowest. Hypothesis 6 predicts an increase in suicide terrorism, specifically.

Attacks: This variable is a count of all terrorist attacks undertaken by each respective group since 2001, when pledging started, according to the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) (START, 2015).

Suicide: This is a count of all suicide terrorist attacks undertaken by each respective group, according to GTD.

Hypothesis 7 predicts groups will commit more severe attacks as competition among pledged groups increases. I measure severity in two ways: target selection and type of attack.

Target: To assess the severity of target selection and attack types, I follow the coding scheme of Conrad and Greene (2015). GTD identifies 22 target selections. They are grouped into 3 ordinal categories, based on the 'shock value' of the attack. This measure is ordinal because as the categories increase, the attack target or type increases in shock value. Indeed, a low-value attack on infrastructure is less poignant and less shocking than a high-value attack on citizens, which directly confronts a government's ability to protect its people. *Target* is coded as '1' if the attack is against infrastructure, '2' if it is against police, military, government personnel, other terrorists, or violent political parties and '3' if it is against civilians.

Type: GTD categorizes nine types of attacks according to the tactic used. These tactics are also grouped into 3 ordinal categories. *Type* is coded as '1' in attacks in which humans are in no physical danger, '2' when the attack poses an explicit threat to human life (such as hostages or hijackings) and '3' when the attack is overtly violent (such as assassinations or bombings). These categories are mutually exclusive. For both *Target* and *Type*, attacks listed as 'Other' are coded as missing, following Conrad & Greene (2015). When a group undertakes no attacks in a given year, it is coded as '0' to represent a decision to scale down violence or an inability to compete. For each observation (group-month), the highest level of target and attack type in that month is used.

Explanatory variables

Regarding the interaction of pledging and the competitive environment, I test the interactive effect between *Pledge * # Pledged Groups.*

Pledge: as a dichotomous variable which indicates whether a group is formally pledged to a parent organization ('1') or not ('0') in a given month. Groups coded as 0 represent the time period in which a group enters the dataset before they formally pledge (switching to a '1') or some groups that are Salafi jihadist groups, but never pledge.

 # Pledged Groups: is a count of the total number of pledged groups at any given time.

This interactive analysis allows for assessment of the specific competitive environment among pledged groups. These counts are drawn from a combination of 2 sources: the United Nation's 1267 Sanctions list (2015) for all pledged groups and Jones' (2014) work on Salafi groups. Groups which are charities or other non-terrorist group entities are dropped from the sample. Jones (2014) discusses the existence of all Salafi groups and the years in which groups have pledged allegiance. The UN updates the list every time a group is added or deleted and issues a press release. As of the end of 2014, the list has been altered over 50 times. Additionally, groups fail to survive throughout the course of the sample time period, ensuring additional variation.

Controls

I control for variables that are likely to influence both competition among groups and the severity of that competition. I first control for several state-level factors. In general, a state's capacity should influence group's ability to operate and thus be competitive and undertake terrorism attacks.

Civil War: is a dichotomous variable (Pettersson & Wallensteen, 2015). Governments engaged in civil wars may be less able to combat terrorism, allowing for groups to devote more resources towards terrorist violence. Furthermore, there is often an overlap between civil war violence and terrorism which should be accounted for (Findley & Young, 2012b).

Population: measures the population of a state. Large populations may present a more difficult environment for governments to monitor and enforce anti-terrorism policies.

GDP: measures the GDP to account for the economic determinants of terrorism. Both *Population* and *GDP* are measured according to World Bank Indicators (World Bank, 2014).

Regime: denotes the current regime type on a 3-point scale. Polity values <-5 are autocratic, Polity values >5 are democratic and Polity values in the middle (baseline) are anocratic. It is theorized that the impact of regime type on terrorism is an inverted U-shape, with anocracies experiencing the highest levels (Gaibulloev, Piazza & Sandler, 2017).

Regime Change: is a dichotomous variable, in which '1' denotes states that have undergone a change in regime type (3 point change on the Polity IV scale) and accounts for the possibility that terrorism may be a response to new or weak regimes (Marshall, 2018).

I also control for several group-level factors, which again influence whether groups can efficiently operate.

Size: is a scale variable ranging from 1 to 4. The four bins represent 99 or fewer members, 100 to 999 members, 1,000 to 9,999 members and 10,000 + members. Larger

groups have been found to survive longer, affecting their ability to undertake attacks (Jones & Libicki, 2008).

Public Goods and *Reputation:* are a dichotomous variables derived from the Reputation of Terror Groups Database, which codes actions groups can take in order to build a reputation and represent how tied a group is to its local audiences. Groups more interested in providing public or political services may be less interested in competition or undertaking terrorism attacks, as they build their reputations through other means (Tokdemir & Akcinaroglu, 2016).

Age and *Age2:* represent the age in years. Older groups may be better equipped to carry out attacks and more able to pledge allegiance.

Overall Attacks: is a count of the total attacks in a given month by all groups in order to account for the general trends among Salafi groups.

Competition: is a count of the total number of groups operating in a country at any given time. This accounts for the traditional outbidding theory of more groups in a state leading to more competition, and thus more attacks (Bloom, 2005). These four variables are drawn from the Global Terrorism Database (START, 2015).

Alliances: taken from the Horowitz and Potter (2014) dataset, is a count of the number of alliances each given group has in a given year. The total number of horizontal alliances a group has (rather than strictly if they pledged to a parent organization) may influence both the resources they possess and tactical diffusion among groups.

Estimation strategy

Because both dependent variables *Attacks* and *Suicide* are count variables, I use an event account model. Poisson models assume observations are independent, which is not tenable here.

Since the event count variables of attacks and suicide attacks are dependent and also over dispersed, with a great variance in the number of attacks by a group, I utilize a negative binomial model. Group and time fixed effects are included to account for the time invariant factors in the states each group mainly operates out of and for the general upward trend of groups pledging. Fixed effects generates a 'within' estimator, such that results can be interpreted as a unit increase in the explanatory variable yielding a change in the dependent variable, within each given group.

As both dependent variables *Target* and *Type* are ordinal scales, I utilize an ordered logistic model. I also include robust standard errors clustered by group to address any potential problems with heteroskedasticity and serial correlation (Greene, 2002) and continue to utilize time fixed effects. Coefficients for the respective key explanatory variables can be interpreted as an increase in the number or change in number of Salafi or pledged groups results in, on average, an *x* change in the quantity or severity of attacks for a respective group, compared to months when there is lower competition.

CHAPTER 4

4. Empirical Chapter I: Predicting Pledging

4.1 Empirical Analysis

Hypothesis 1 makes the fairly straightforward prediction that as the cost of affiliation rises, groups are less likely to affiliate. Support for Hypothesis 1 would indicate that the costs of a potential crackdown dictate the decision to affiliate, in general. Overall, the average group cannot (or is not willing to) risk the costs of a crackdown post-affiliation. Thus, we should expect the coefficients on the explanatory variables of interest to be negative and statistically significant.

As evidenced in Table 5 below representing the costs of a potential crackdown using domestic costs, measured as Support Denied, Military Expenditure, and Tax Revenue (Tax/GDP) are indeed negative and significant. These results indicate as the potential costs of affiliation rise, affiliation becomes less likely. The political terror score does not have a statistically significant impact, perhaps because of the limited variation within Pakistan, India, and Afghanistan. All 3 countries score above a 3 (out of 5) for the vast majority of the years in the sample.

Table 6 represents the potential for a crackdown based on international costs. Both the # of US Troops in Afghanistan and the presence of US Troops in a warzone are negative and statistically significant. The amount of US Aid and Total International Aid is also negative and statistically significant. In general, the more international influence to induce a crackdown, whether through troops in the country or aid flowing in, the less likely a group is to affiliate.

VARIABLES	(1) Military Capacity	(2) Governance Capacity	(3) Deny Support	(4) Political Terror
Military Expend	-0.07**	--	--	--
	(0.03)			
Tax/GDP	--	-0.10***	--	--
		(0.03)		
Support Denied	--	--	-0.38***	--
			(0.09)	
PT Score	--	--	--	0.05
				(0.08)
Splinter	-0.00	0.00	0.02	0.07
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.10)
Age	0.05***	0.06***	0.05***	0.05***
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Age2	-0.00**	-0.00**	-0.00**	-0.00**
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Terrorist	0.09	0.12	0.14	0.16*
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)
Alliances	0.06***	0.05***	0.05***	0.05***
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
War	0.12	0.18*	0.14	0.16
	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.11)
Polity	-0.02	-0.01	-0.02	-0.02
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
GDPpc	0.00*	0.00*	0.00*	0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Population	0.24***	0.21***	0.20***	0.23***
	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)
Cold War	-0.36**	-0.36**	-0.33**	-0.34**
	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.16)
9/11	-0.14	-0.02	0.12	0.10
	(0.17)	(0.14)	(0.13)	(0.14)
Trade	0.01*	0.00	0.01**	0.01**
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Constant	-5.35***	-4.55***	-4.93***	-5.91***
	(1.28)	(1.35)	(1.30)	(1.48)
Observations	2,773	2,773	2,773	2,724

Robust standard errors in parentheses
Time Polynomials excluded from Table
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 5: Predicting Affiliation with Domestic Costs

VARIABLES	(5) US Troops	(6) US Troops Present	(7) US Aid	(8) All Aid
# US Troops	-0.07*	--	--	--
	(0.03)			
US Troops Present	--	-0.82***	--	--
		(0.28)		
US Aid	--	--	-0.03**	--
			(0.02)	
International Aid	--	--	--	-0.01*
				(0.01)
Splinter	0.05	0.06	0.05	0.05
	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)
Age	0.05***	0.05***	0.05***	0.05***
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Age2	-0.00	-0.00	-0.00	-0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Terrorist	0.10	0.11	0.10	0.10
	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)
Alliances	0.05***	0.05***	0.05***	0.05***
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
War	0.15	0.22*	0.13	0.14
	(0.11)	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.11)
Polity	-0.01	0.01	-0.01	-0.01
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
GDPpc	-0.00	0.00	-0.00	-0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Population	0.17**	0.23***	0.17**	0.17**
	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)
Cold War	-0.36**	-0.35**	-0.42***	-0.43***
	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.15)
9/11	0.26*	0.27*	0.25*	0.24
	(0.15)	(0.14)	(0.15)	(0.15)
Trade	0.00	0.00	0.01**	0.01**
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Constant	-4.30***	-4.99***	-4.33***	-4.33***
	(1.35)	(1.32)	(1.36)	(1.38)
Observations	1,027	1,027	2,410	2,410

Robust standard errors in parentheses
Time Polynomials excluded from Table
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 6: Predicting Affiliation with International Costs

Examining the marginal predictions of each key explanatory variable in Figures 7 & 8, there is further evidence for Hypothesis 1[16]. A denial of external support, strong militaries, and competent governance structures all predict less affiliation among political violence groups. In each case, when costs are low (on the x-axis), all groups are more likely to affiliate with a parent organization (higher values on the y-axis). As costs rise, groups become significantly less likely to affiliate.

For example when examining military capacity in Figure 7, when military expenditure is low (between 1 and 3 on the x-axis), the probability of a group affiliating is around 55-60%. When expenditure is high (between 9 and 12 on the x-axis), the probability of a group affiliating drops to approximately 40%. This logic exists for the presence of troops and foreign aid in countries as well. For example in Figure 8, when US troops are present in a warzone and able to influence a crackdown post-affiliation, the probability a group affiliates drops by approximately 20%

In sum, the potential of a country domestically or the international community to impose a crackdown affects the decision of political violence groups to affiliate. On average, the more costly affiliation would be, the less likely groups are to pursue these types of vertical alliances. The general group is unwilling to risk this costly crackdown to affiliate, and instead will choose to not form relationships or only form horizontal alliances.

[16] Ranges represent the min and max for each variable

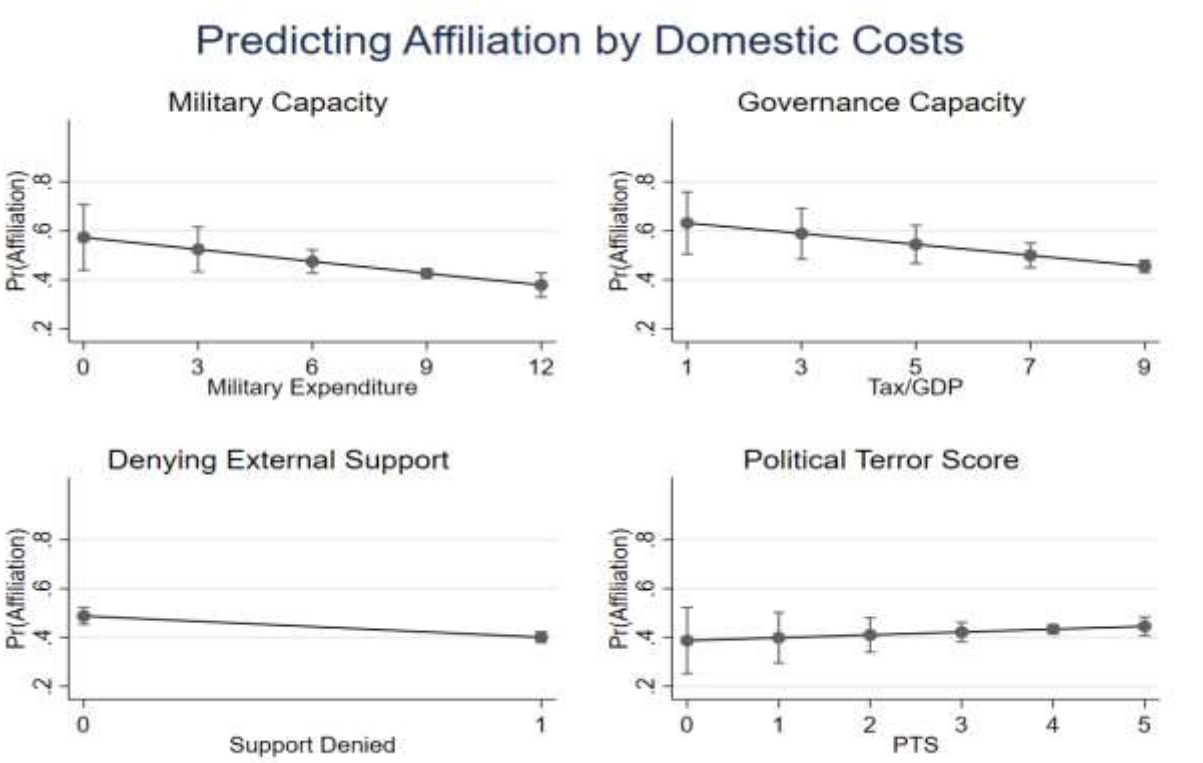

Figure 7: Predicting Affiliation as Domestics Costs Increase

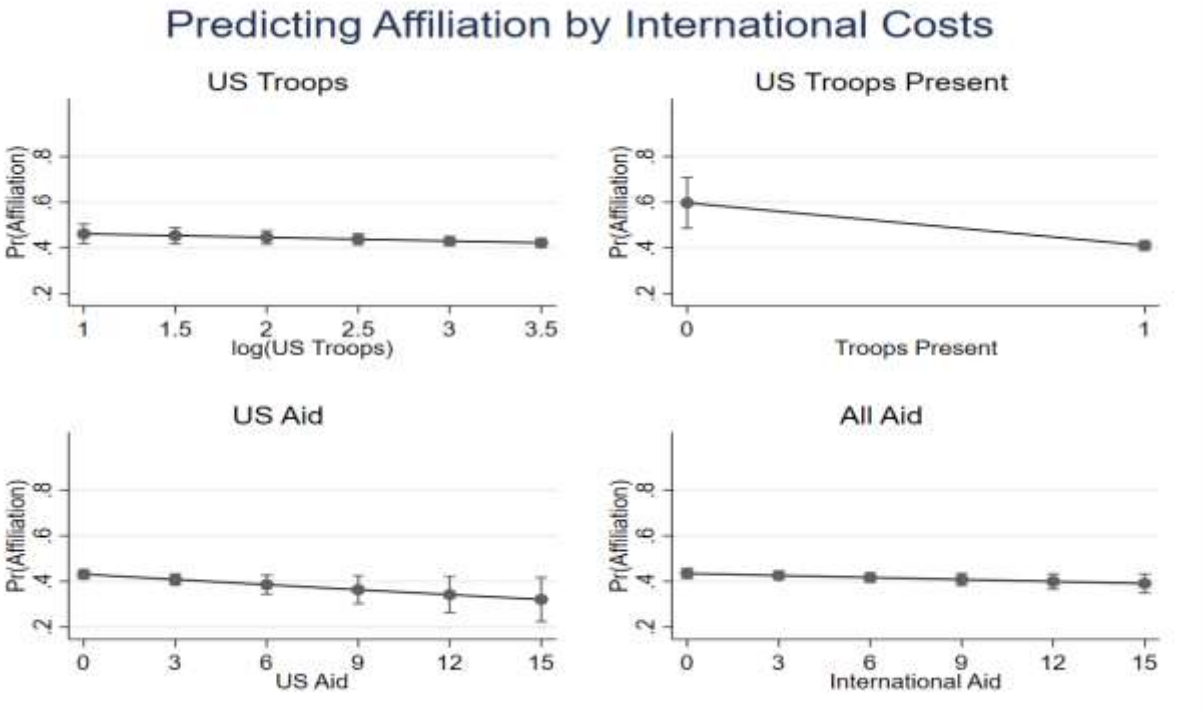

Figure 8: Predicting Affiliation as International Costs Increase

However, we still do observe affiliation. Under what circumstances do groups actually choose to affiliate? From the model and the corresponding equilibrium space in Chapter 2, we observe that as costs rise, affiliation can be utilized as a costly signal. A pooling equilibrium, in which all types affiliate and there is no signaling, exists when costs are lowest. But with higher costs, we should observe groups using affiliation as a signal, exemplified with the (semi) separating equilibria. These equilibria separate out types – those who use affiliation to send a costly signal of commitment to the parent organization's expanded or broader goals and those who are not committed and have local goals do not send this signal.

Hypothesis 2 predicts that an affiliated group will be more likely to be an expanded type, particularly at higher costs. As the signal becomes costlier to send, local bluffers should no longer be able to pay the costs to affiliate. At higher costs, only the committed or expanded types should be willing to send this affiliation signal and incur these potential costs. This is because they anticipate resources from the parent organization's expanded base of supporters after affiliation.

Taking the interaction of affiliation with costs into account, Figure 9 exemplifies the logic of Hypothesis 2[17]. Domestically, affiliate groups are the most likely to affiliate at the highest costs, measured by military expenditure, governance capacity and the ability to deny external support. When examining the effect of the political terror score, affiliate groups are more likely to be the expanded type than non-affiliate groups. However, this is true across almost all levels of the political terror score from 1-5 (thus the separating effect based on cost levels is not clear).

[17] Ranges represent the min and max for each variable

Substantively, using military capacity as an example, at very low military costs (between 1 and 3 on the x-axis) when all groups can risk affiliation while paying little costs, the groups are statistically indistinguishable from one another. Pledging cannot reliably predict the goal type. Expanded types will affiliate, but so can local types because the costs are low. This is representative of the pooling equilibrium in which all groups will pledge.

As the costs rise, when affiliation can be used as a signal and thus only truly expanded groups should be willing to affiliate and incur costs, we observe affiliate groups to be significantly more likely to be an expanded type than non-affiliate groups. An affiliate group has a 35% probability of being an expanded type at these higher costs (when military expenditure is between 9 and 12), while a non-affiliate group has little more than a 15% probability of being expanded.

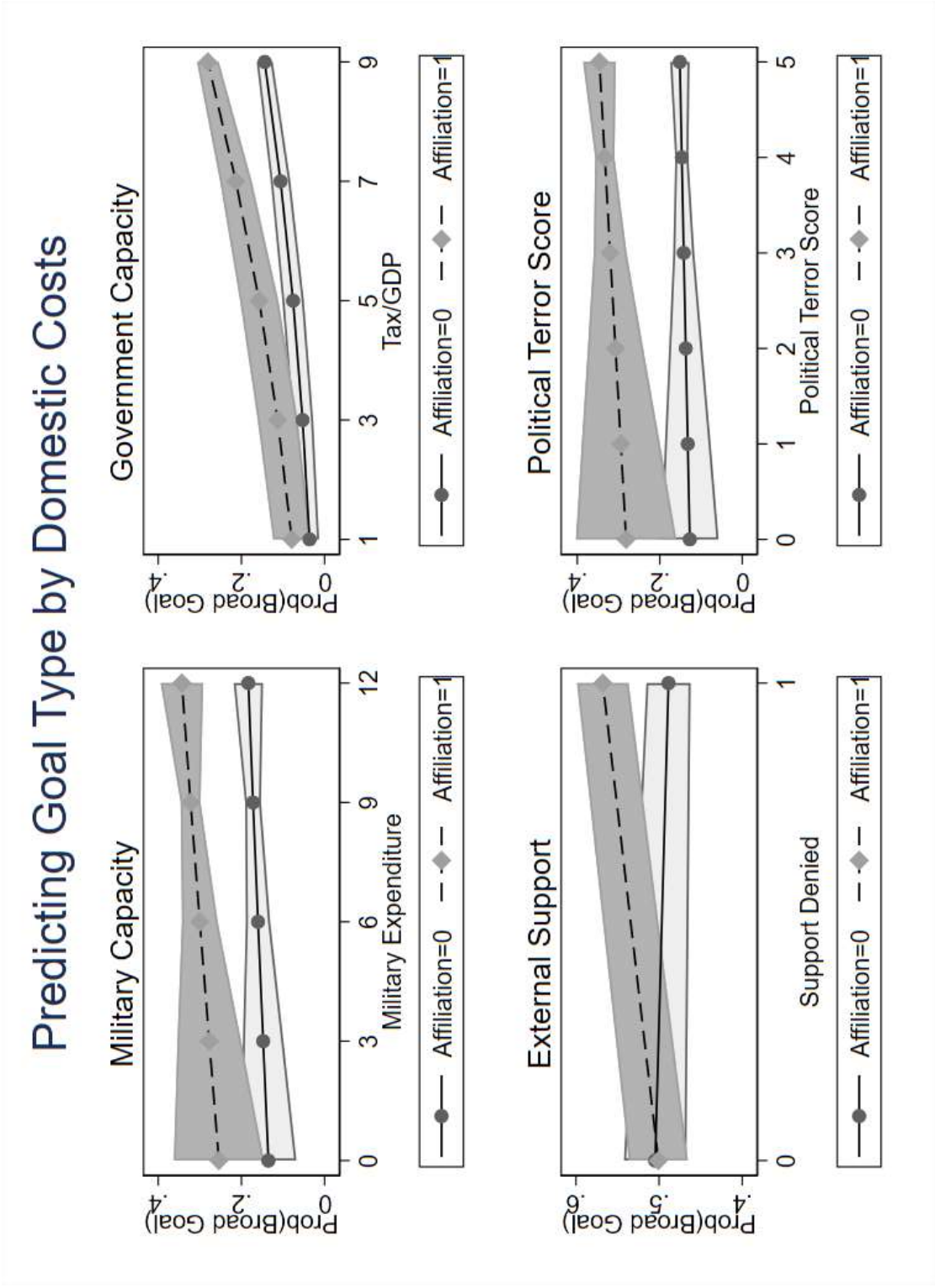

Figure 9: Predicting Goal Type by Domestic Costs of Signal

In Figure 10, the probability of a broader goal based on the international costs of affiliation is further examined. The # of US troops and their presence in a warzone both influence the types of group that affiliate. Again, when costs along the x-axis are low, affiliate and non-affiliate groups are not statistically distinguishable. However, as the potential to influence a crackdown increases along the x-axis, affiliate groups are the statistically more likely to be the expanded type. They state they have broader goals, matching a parent organization's expanded goals. Affiliates are more willing to incur costs as a costly signal, as they can credibly signal their type as expanded. The illustrative case below and Chapter 5 examine when this signal leads to more resources. The level of aid, both in total and by the US specifically, does not serve to distinguish between affiliate and non-affiliate groups.

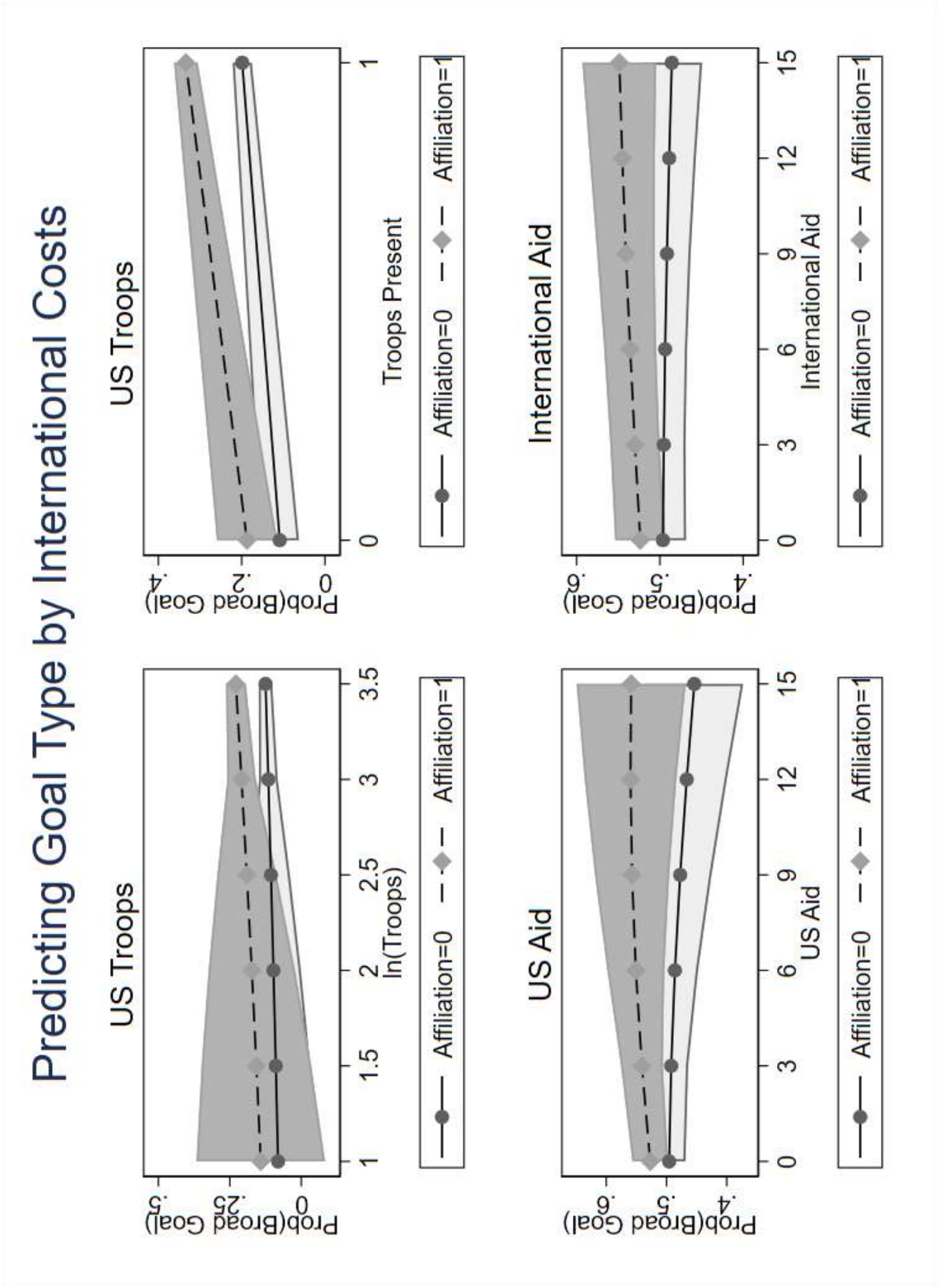

Figure 10: Predicting Goal Type by International Costs of Signal

In sum, some groups will try to bluff and pretend to be committed to the parent organization through stating their goals as expanded. Affiliating when the potential for a costly crackdown is high can help mitigate this, however. Affiliation as a costly signal can demonstrate expanded goals that match the parent organization, allowing potential supporters to send resources to affiliate groups they know to be committed to the parent organization.

There is a rich body of literature on alliances between all types of actors, whether states, international organizations or political violence groups. Particularly among political violence groups, much of the literature examines the horizontal aspect of these alliances, however. I argue we need a way to understand the more hierarchical nature these relationships often take on. Political violence groups, whether terrorist, rebel or militia, often purposefully choose to affiliate with a parent organization. Political violence groups can use affiliation with a parent organization as a costly signal of their commitment to the goals of that organization. Indeed, statistical analyses find affiliate groups more likely to have these expanded goals, particularly when costs are higher and separate out the committed groups from bluffers.

4.2 Illustrative Case

While the statistical analysis tests the broader relationship between affiliation and a potential crackdown, it does not examine the mechanisms of the theoretical argument. To address these, I provide a brief illustration of the logic of affiliation as a costly signal to obtain resources. From the cases in the data, I utilize the group the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA), a hybrid rebel-terrorist group established in north east India in 1979. Fighting for the right for an independent state, the group still operates today. ULFA has been an affiliate to the parent organization the United National Liberation Front of Western South East Asia (UNLFW) since 2015. ULFA also had the opportunity to affiliate with the Indi-Burma Revolutionary Front

(IBRF) in 1990, but this group ultimately fell apart. The ULFA case presents a unique opportunity to examine multiple decisions to affiliate by the same group, with different outcomes. There is notable variation within the key independent variable (potential crackdown).

ULFA formed in 1979 with a political and military wing. It seeks to establish an independent state of Asom. Asom is a peripheral region of India, sitting in the Northeast above Bangladesh. Along with other states in the region, the Asomese people believe India has utilized state terrorism and economic exploitation against them. Based on their ethnic identity and the perceived government abuse against the indigenous citizens, the Asomese people believe they have the right to their own sovereign state. The state of Asom is one of many separatist movements in Northeast region, with others being Meghalaya, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Manipur, and Nagaland.

Throughout its existence, ULFA has engaged in numerous horizontal alliances. Domestically, they have exchanged arms and training with groups such as The Muslim United Liberation Tigers of Assam (MULTA) and the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN). They formed these same relationships with terrorist groups abroad, such as the Sri Lankan Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Across borders, they have found safe havens from the government in Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Myanmar (Burma), often hosting training camps in these states (SATP 2020a).

In 1990, ULFA first considered moving beyond these horizontal relationships and affiliating with a parent organization. The group contemplated joining the Indo-Burma Revolutionary Front (IBRF), a parent organization seeking a pan-Mongoloid coalition. The IBRF was made up of groups such as the United National Liberation Front (UNLF) of India and

the Kuki National Army (KNA) of Burma, all seeking to "wage a united struggle for the independence of Indo-Burma" (SATP 2020b).

Operating out of Myanmar (Burma), the parent organization failed to make progress and quickly fell apart (Bureau 2015). The potential for a crackdown while operating in Myanmar in 1990 was fairly low. The government was in the midst of turmoil after national elections saw 80% of the vote go to the opposition party, the National League for Democracy (NLD). The military regime refused to recognize these results, instead arresting dozens of opposition parliamentarians and cracking down on political protests (HRW 2015). In light of this focus on maintaining the capital, the IBRF, who were operating in in the peripheral regions, were allowed to operate with minimal interference from the Myanmar government (Bhattacharya 2018).

This freedom led to a noted lack of trust among the diverse groups forming the IBRF (TRAC 2020). With no group having to pay high costs to join, it was difficult to disentangle the motives. Ultimately, accusations were made that individual groups were merely using affiliation as a means to traffic guns and drugs across the border, rather than to unite and fight for the entire Indo-Burmese region (Bureau 2015). With no way to prove their commitment, the parent organization folded.

In 2011, a new parent organization formed named The United National Liberation Front of Western South East Asia (UNLFW) (Kalita 2015). The group formed with the express intent of ratcheting up the violence in the region amidst the backdrop of a weakening insurgency in Northeast India. By 2015, several insurgent groups had signed cease fire agreements, inserting doubt into the future of the Northeast India insurgency campaigns. The UNLFW parent organization created a region-wide goal to connect rebel groups across the regions, stating their goal: "to have a united and total struggle to liberate our ancestral homes situated in Western

South East Asia to secure our Sovereign political future from occupation and domination and march ahead in peace, progress and prosperity of the whole region." Immediately upon forming, the UNLFW fighters took part in the heaviest fighting the region had seen in 5 years (UCDP 2020).

In light of this increased fighting and broader goal, especially at the same time as India was working towards sustained ceasefire agreements, the crackdown on the UNLFW was swift. Security forces were given sweeping shoot-to-kill powers in "disturbed areas" of the North East India region under controversial Armed Forces Special Powers Act. Affiliate groups who joined the UNLFW would come under the same fate (FirstPost 2015).

ULFA officially affiliated with the UNLFW in April 2015, signing a document along with three other affiliate groups. The UNLFW eventually grew to 11 affiliates, though over 40 groups seeking sovereignty in Northeast India are operational today (Kalita 2015). However, not all these groups are capable or willing to send the costly signal of affiliation. Indeed, upon affiliation, ULFA saw a surgical strike by the Indian government destroy their long-standing training camps in the autonomous regions along the Myanmar border less than two months after signing the affiliation document (Banerjee 2018).

However, ULFA reaped additional benefits by proving their commitment to the UNLFW, which they had not seen in the previous 40 years of conflict. Their leader Paresh Baruah spoke of the new tactic the group is pursuing along with the UNLFW in 2018, stating, “We are reaching out to countries and international bodies like the United Nations in a big way, to boost opinion in our favour” (ibid). This type of “rebel diplomacy” demonstrates a new willingness to seek operate in the international system and engage in the international politics of a civil war (Huang 2016).

Additionally, the group moved their safe haven to China. China now allows this because of their interest in the destabilization of Indian domestic politics and the UNLFW's newfound ability to affect this. With the clout of the UNLFW behind them, ULFA has moved their operations and training to the Chinese border region, where India is unwilling to utilize the shoot-to-kill privileges because of China's global power status. This is unlike in the autonomous regions of the Myanmar border, where ULFA previously operated and was attacked by Indian forces (Bhattacharya 2018).

Baruah has also discussed ULFA's growing ranks since joining the UNLFW. They have drawn new members from both Asom and other Northeast India states, remarking "What surprises me is that the organisation that was almost dead is now heavily recruiting people." According to intelligence officers, around 150 youth from Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland have joined ULFA in 2018 alone (Banerjee 2018). The broader goal promoted by the UNLFW allows ULFA to both revitalize their own recruiting efforts, as well as draw recruits from states outside of Asom.

ULFA affiliated with the IBRF in 1990 but saw no benefits, as the IBRF failed shortly after its inception. Operating with near impunity in a chaotic Myanmar, there was little cost to joining the parent organization. In light of this, the groups did not trust the motives of other affiliate groups. With no way to prove commitment to the IBRF, the parent organization and supporters could not separate out the dedicated groups from those bluffing.

The UNLFW, conversely, has continued to thrive even amongst the high costs of affiliation. The affiliate groups have united under the broader goal of sovereignty for all of Northeast India. Groups' willingness to risk the crackdown of affiliation, in the form of a shoot-to-kill order, has led to benefits for ULFA from a broader audience, such as internationalization

of the cause and increased recruitment. Again, when the costs are high enough to separate types, affiliation can serve as an effective means of demonstrating commitment in order to receive resources.

CHAPTER 5

5. Evaluating the Mechanism: Experiment

5.1 Experimental Results

5.1.1 Main Results

Hypothesis 3 states: *When groups are affiliated with a parent organization, there is more counter- violence support from the public than when groups are unaffiliated.*

To test this hypothesis, respondents were asked to read a vignette that gave basic information about the government's opportunity to adjust their level of counterinsurgency effort. The treatment of interest is Affiliation. The control vignette only gave information regarding general counterinsurgency efforts in the country (India or Pakistan). The treatment vignette included information about groups affiliated with a parent organization working against the interests of the country.

After reading the vignette, respondents were asked to give their opinion on the level of counterinsurgency the government should pursue. They were asked about two options: the number of personnel (whether military or police) the government should invest in counterinsurgency, as well as the monetary support the government should invest. In each case, respondents were asked to answer on a 5-point scale, with 1 being no investment and 5 being the maximum investment possible. The distribution of answers are shown in Figure 11 below, with a mean Personnel investment of 3.68/5.00 and a mean Monetary investment of 3.61/5.00.

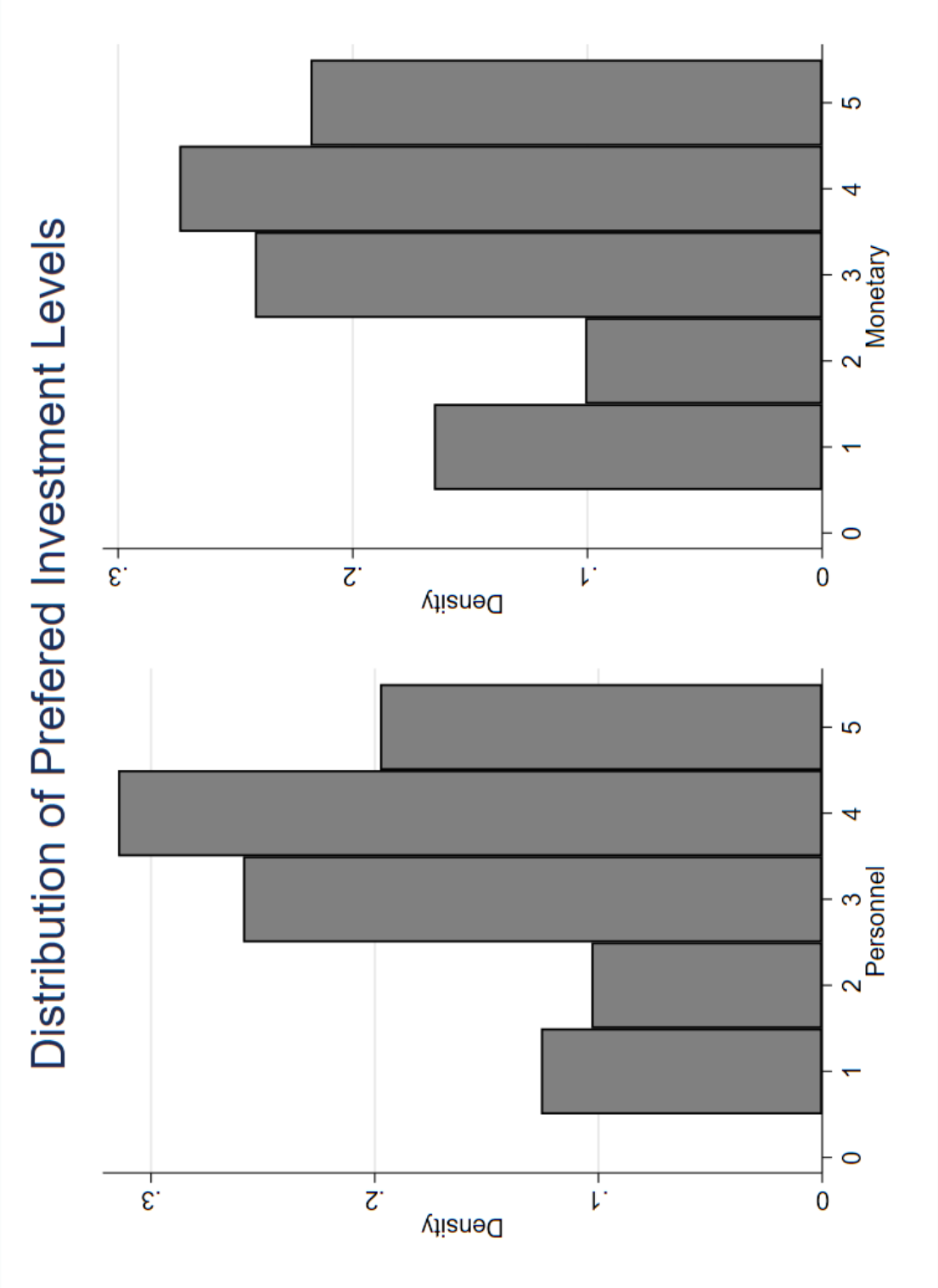

Figure 11: Distribution of Key Dependent Variables (Hypothesis 3)

In order to find support for Hypothesis 3, respondents who received the Affiliation treatment should, on average, prefer higher levels of counterinsurgency investments. To assess these preferences, a series of two sample t-tests were used to test if the mean levels of preferred counterinsurgency are equal amongst the control (no affiliation) and treatment (affiliation) groups. If the mean levels of preferred investment are significantly greater within the treated group, then Hypothesis 3 would be supported.

In relation to the theory, support for Hypothesis 3 would suggest that affiliation is indeed costly. If the public generally supports more counterinsurgency measures when they are aimed at affiliate groups, then governments (particularly in these Democratic countries) can be induced into following public opinion on foreign policy, thus investing in and targeting these affiliate groups with harsher counterinsurgency measures.

Below, Tables 7 & 8 and Figures 12 & 13 provide support for Hypothesis 3. Table 5 and Figure 12 exhibit the mean level of support for personnel investment amongst the No Affiliation (control) group and the Affiliation (treatment) group. The mean level of preferred personnel is 0.33 points higher within the treated group when compared to the control group, a statistically significant difference. Thus, when respondents were given information about an affiliate group, they were significantly more likely to support investing more personnel towards counterinsurgency policies. As evidenced in Table 6 and Figure 13, this result holds when respondents were asked about monetary investments as well. Overall, these results suggest that public opinion on affiliation would lead to pressure for increased counterinsurgency investment and measures against these groups.

	No Affiliation	**Affiliation**	Difference	P-Value			No Affiliation	**Affiliation**	Difference	P-Value
Personnel Support	3.19	**3.52**	-0.33	**0.00**		Monetary Support	3.10	**3.46**	-0.36	**0.00**

Table 7: Support for Personnel Investment

Table 8: Support for Monetary

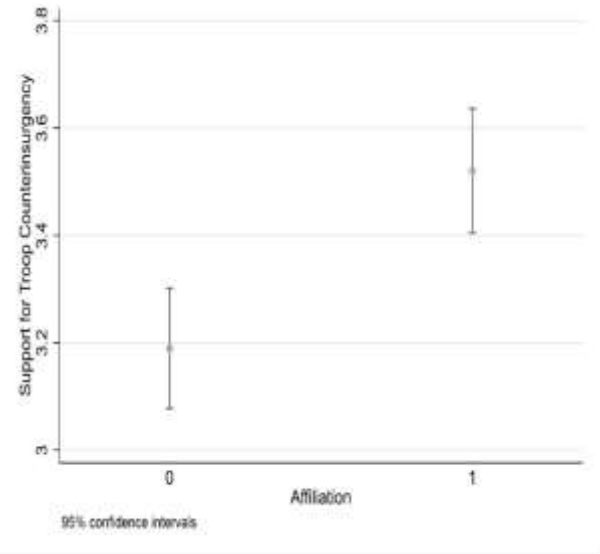

Figure 12: Support for Personnel

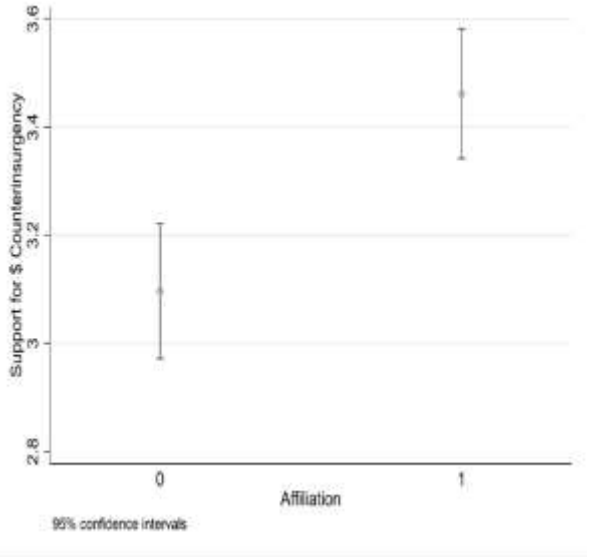

Figure 13: Support for Monetary Investment

Hypothesis 4 states: *Given a group pledged, when there is a potential for a successful crackdown, the more likely the parent organization's audience is to support the affiliate group*.

To test this hypothesis, respondents were again asked to read a vignette. This vignette gave information about a foreign policy that could be implemented in their country. The treatment of interest is endorsement by an affiliate group. The control vignette only gave information regarding the general policy. The treatment vignette included information about groups affiliated with a parent organization that were endorsing the policy.

I am interested in the way in which information about endorsement by a group can affect the level of support for a policy (and thus tacit support for the group). This endorsement design is used because there is a social desirability bias, in which respondents don't want to directly express support for a violent group. Yet, I still expect overall low levels of support to exist in the countries, generally. However, as discussed in previous chapters, respondents in conflict-affected regions should be more willing to support the violent affiliate groups. Therefore, Hypothesis 4 is examined amongst the whole sample, as well as amongst only those located in conflict-affected regions where support may be generally higher.

After reading the vignette, respondents were asked to provide a level of support for the policy on a 5-point scale, with 1 being no support and 5 being very supportive. The distribution of responses is shown in Figure 14 below, with a mean level of support overall 3.81/5.00 and a mean level of support in conflict-affected regions 3.86/5.00.

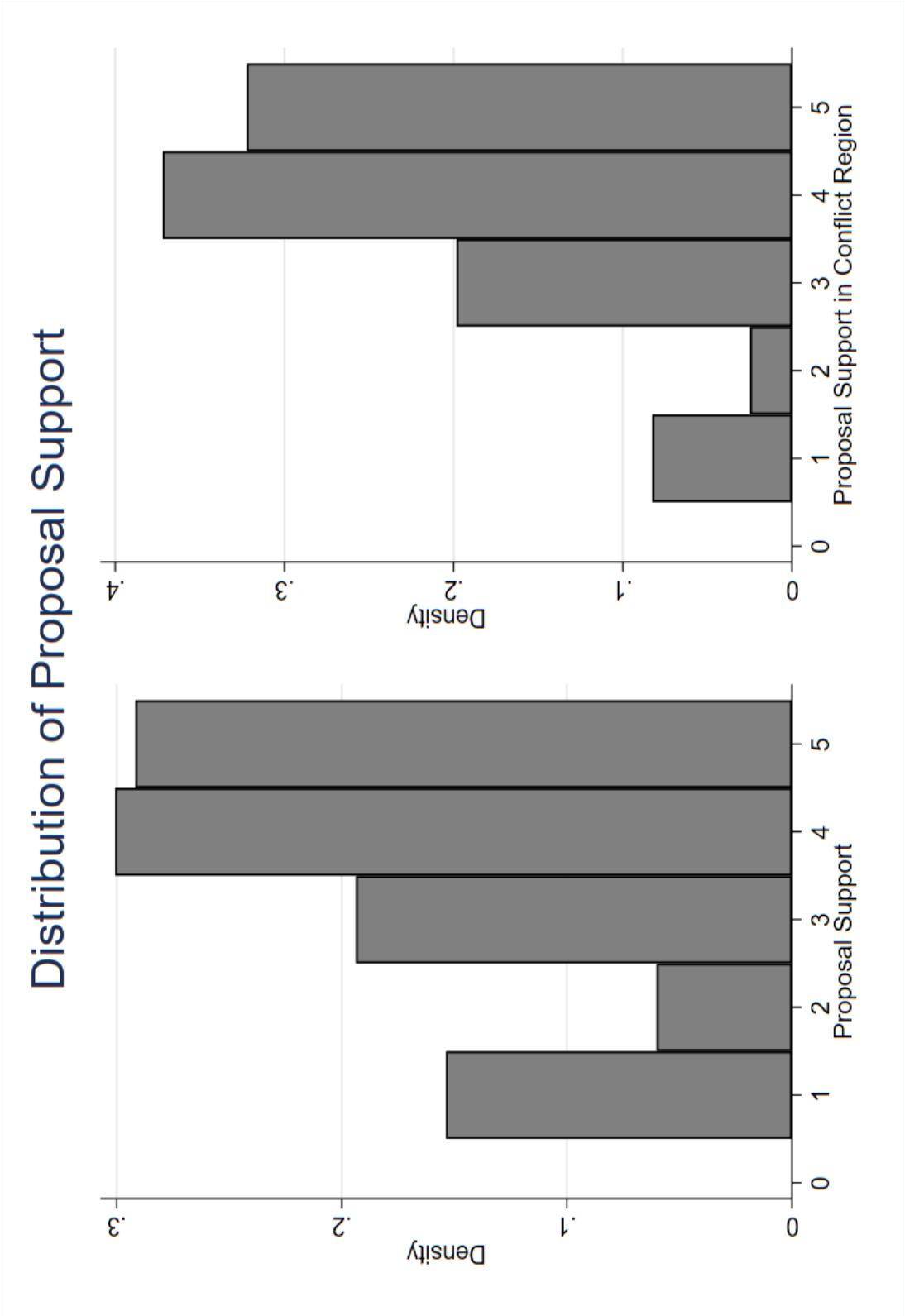

Figure 14: Distribution of Key Dependent Variables (Hypothesis 4)

To test Hypothesis 4, respondents who received the endorsement treatment should, on average, support the policy more. Yet, I only expect this result to hold within conflict-affected regions. To assess these preferences, again a series of two sample t-tests were used to test if the mean levels of policy support are equal amongst the control (no endorsement) and treatment (endorsement) groups. To support Hypothesis 4, the mean levels of policy support must be significantly higher within the treated group.

Below, Tables 9 & 10 and Figures 15 & 16 provide patterns of support for Hypothesis 4, though estimates all fail to reach statistical significance. Table 7 and Figure 15 exhibit the mean level of support for policies amongst the No Endorsement (control) group and Endorsement (treatment) group amongst the entire survey population. The mean level of support is 0.15 points higher with no endorsement, which is not a statistically significant difference. This is an expected result, as the population in general is unlikely to support endorsing groups.

As evidenced in Table 8 and Figure 16, this result does not hold when limiting the sample to only respondents in conflict-affected regions. Respondents in these regions are more likely by 0.18 points to support the policy when it is endorsed by a group, though this result closely fails to reach statistical significance. By leveraging geographically targeted sampling, potential patterns of support for affiliate groups begin to emerge. Respondents in general do not support these affiliate groups, but they are more likely to within conflict-affected regions.

	No Endorsement	Endorsement	Difference	P-Value
Proposal Support	3.89	3.74	0.15	0.13

Table 9: Policy Support among Full Sample

	No Endorsement	Endorsement	Difference	P-Value

Table 10: Policy Support in Conflict-Affected Regions

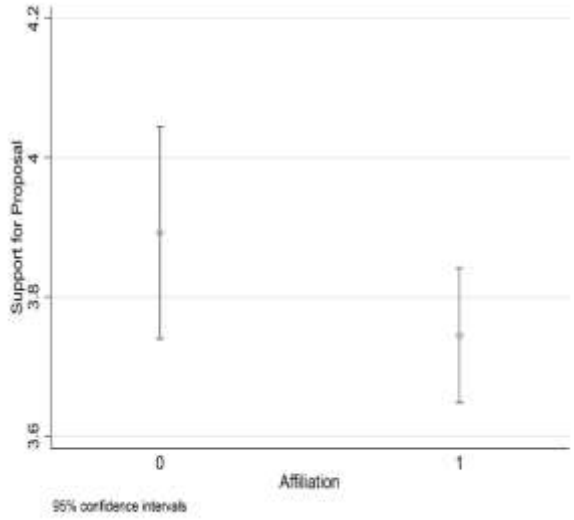

Figure 15: Policy Support among Full Sample

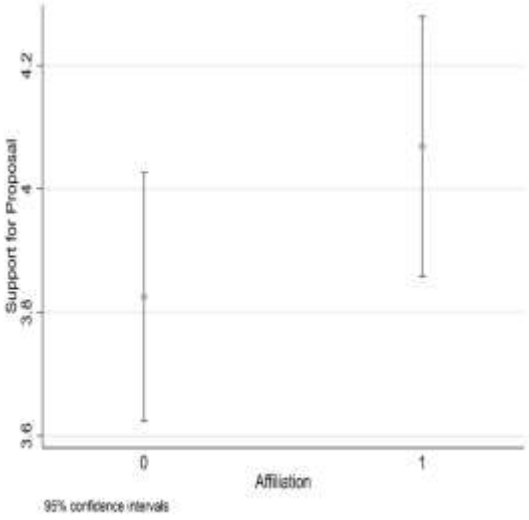

Figure 16: Policy Support in Conflict-Affected Areas

Importantly, the theory suggests that support for these affiliate groups is generated by the costly signal mechanism. In half of the vignette responses, respondents were provided information about the endorsing affiliate groups. Half of these respective respondents were told that the affiliate groups had ties (religious, ethnic, or ideological) to the region in which the policy was proposed. The other half received information about a costly signal, being told the affiliate groups could face a crackdown for their actions.

According to the theory, this costly signal mechanism should drive support for the policy (and thus the affiliate groups) more so than shared ties. Indeed, as evidence in Table 11 and Figure 17, respondents who received the costly signal mechanism supported the policy by 0.39 points more, a statistically significant difference. This suggests that potential supporters in these conflict-affected regions do indeed recognize the costly signal, offering greater support under these conditions.

	Shared Ties Mechanism	**Costly Signal Mechanism**	Difference	P-Value
Proposal Support	3.87	**4.26**	-0.39	**0.01**

Table 11: Policy Support (Shared Ties vs. Costly Signal Mechanism)

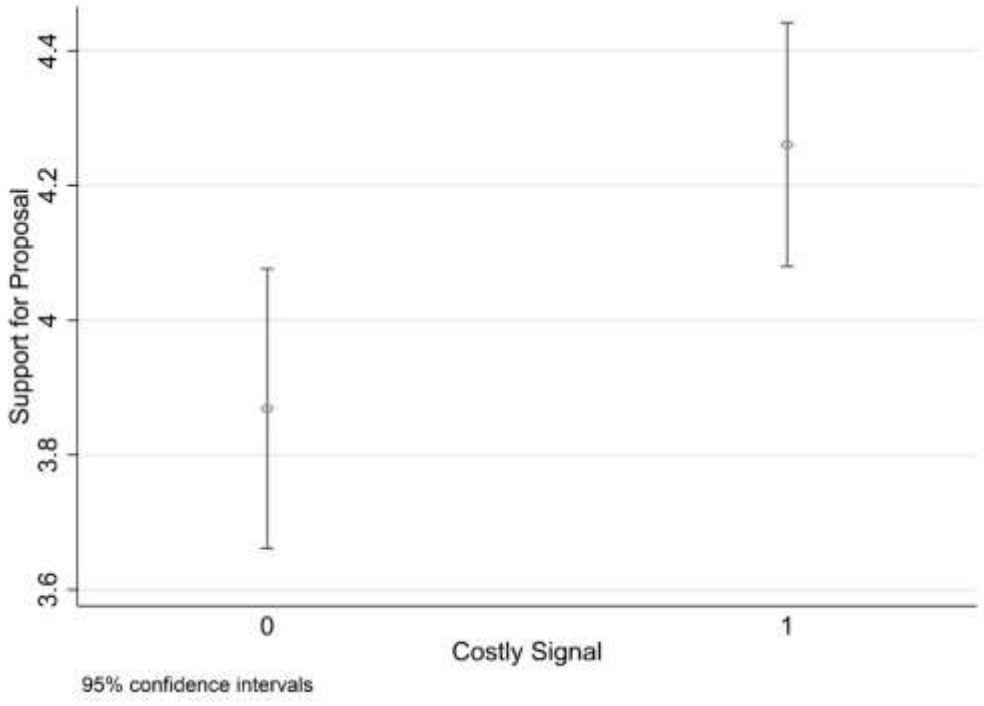

Figure 17: Policy Support (Shared Ties vs. Costly Signal Mechanism)

5.1.2 Robustness Checks

I order to establish causal identification and explore subgroup differences, I briefly examine other variables to ensure that the affiliation treatments were driving results. First, in Vignette 1, respondents were given information about violent groups operating from either their home country (local) or a neighboring country (international). Support for (or against) these groups may be contingent on their relative location to the respondent. However, Table 12 below finds no significant difference between local or international locations of the group.

Second, as evidenced in Table 13, Vignette 1 respondents not residing in conflict-affected regions were statistically more likely to favor higher levels of counterinsurgency action from their governments, measured both as personnel and monetary resource increases. This gives further credence to the results surrounding Hypothesis 4. If respondents in conflict-affected regions favor less counterinsurgency, they should be more willing to in turn be open to supporting political violence groups.

Third, respondents who found the issues presented in the vignettes were more likely to favor increased counterinsurgency measures (Table 14) or to favor the proposal (Table 16). This is in line with expectations that respondents who care about an issue will favor action. Lastly, in terms of which issue respondents were presented with, results are mixed. When asked about support for personnel, there is no significant difference between the answers of respondents presented with Kashmir issues versus other issues. Yet, respondents presented with Kashmir issues supported significantly less monetary resources (Table 15). However, when asked about a Kashmir-specific policy proposal (Table 17), respondents were more likely to support the proposal than other issue areas.

Lastly, the biggest advantage of experiments is the causal inferences that can be made. Many model designs (such as regression) suffer from the problems of confounders—factors that

could affect both the independent and dependent variables and thus be driving the results. However, when the randomization of an experiment is implemented correctly, there should be no systematic tendency for one type of each factor to be in control or treatment group. We can assume that both observed and unobserved factors are equally likely to be in both groups, thus producing unbiased estimates with which causal claims can be made (Druckman and Kam in Druckman et al. 2011).

To check that the randomization assignment worked, I utilize a randomization check on observed demographic questions. I regress each respective treatment on these covariates. I utilize a logit for the binary treatments. Table 18 below shows no significance among the coefficients, indicating no systematic relationship between the covariates and treatments. Accordingly, I proceeded with my analysis assessing the relationships with a series of bivariate tests, assuming confounders are not an issue for unbiased estimates.

	Local	International	Difference	P-Value
Personnel Support	3.40	3.31	0.09	0.23
Monetary Support	3.30	3.25	0.05	0.61

Table 12: Counterinsurgency Support – Local vs International Groups

	Non-Conflict Region	Conflict Region	Difference	P-Value
Personnel Support	**3.44**	3.27	0.17	**0.04**
Monetary Support	**3.37**	3.20	0.17	**0.06**

Table 13: Counterinsurgency Support – Non-Conflict vs Conflict Regions

	Not Important Issue	**Important Issue**	Difference	P-Value
Personnel Support	2.99	**3.50**	-0.51	**0.00**
Monetary Support	2.87	**3.44**	-0.57	**0.00**

Table 14: Counterinsurgency Support – Issue Importance

	Non-Kashmir Issue	Kashmir Issue	Difference	P-Value
Personnel Support	3.26	3.11	0.15	0.18
Monetary Support	**3.27**	3.04	0.23	**0.07**

Table 15: Counterinsurgency Support – Issue Area

	Not Important Issue	**Important Issue**	Difference	P-Value
Proposal Support	3.37	**4.11**	-0.74	**0.00**

Table 16: Proposal Support – Issue Importance

	Non-Kashmir Issue	**Kashmir Issue**	Difference	P-Value
Proposal Support	3.61	**3.98**	-0.37	**0.00**

Table 17: Proposal Support – Issue Area

VARIABLES	(1) Vin 1 Affiliation	(2) Vin 2 Affiliation
Female	0.01	-0.02
	(0.04)	(0.03)
Religion	-0.00	0.01
	(0.02)	(0.02)
US proclivity	-0.01	0.01
	(0.01)	(0.01)
Region	-0.06	-0.03
	(0.05)	(0.04)
Age	-0.01	0.01
	(0.02)	(0.02)
Conflict Region	0.06	0.05
	(0.05)	(0.04)
Democracy view	0.00	-0.01
	(0.01)	(0.01)
Education	0.02	0.00
	(0.02)	(0.02)
Finances	-0.01	0.02*
	(0.01)	(0.01)
Politics	-0.02	-0.02
	(0.01)	(0.01)
India	-0.03	0.02
	(0.04)	(0.04)
Constant	0.56***	0.70***
	(0.10)	(0.09)
Observations	1,056	1,056
R-squared	0.01	0.01

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 18: Randomization Check

5.2 EXPERIMENT IMPLICATIONS

Overall, this experiment provides building blocks for moving forward. Vignette 1, in which respondents gave their level of support for counter political violence measures (personnel or monetary resources), provides support for the assumption that affiliation is indeed costly. When respondents received the treatment of knowing the counterinsurgency forces would go towards groups affiliated with a well-known parent organization, they were significantly more likely to favor high levels of personnel or monetary investment. This suggest that affiliation does indeed have the potential to garner a greater crackdown.

Vignette 2, in which respondents gave their level of support for a policy issue, provides limited support for Hypothesis 4. Overall, the level of support for policies with an endorsing group is not higher than support when there is no endorsing group. This is as suspected with national samples (all of Pakistan and all of India), in which support for political violence groups is generally low. However, when only examining support among respondents located in a conflict-affected region, this result flips. Most importantly, when probing the mechanism behind the higher levels of support in conflicted-affected regions, respondents were most likely to support a policy with an endorsing group if that group faced a costly potential crackdown. This provides initial evidence that respondents do indeed recognize and react to the costly signal mechanism proposed.

In these designs, vignettes were geographically targeted to ensure that respondents were receiving information about policies and groups that were relevant, familiar, and important to them. Furthermore, respondents in conflict-affected regions were over-sampled. This helps ensure that potential supporters of affiliate groups and parent organizations, who are more likely to reside in these regions, are sampled.

Future iterations of this survey experiment could improve upon the design. First, a larger sample with greater power could allow for a broader range of policies and affiliate groups with their parent organizations to be utilized to help test the extent to which the specific parent organization drives results. Initial results highlighted in Tables 12 & 14 are inconclusive as to how much issue areas drive results. Additionally, a larger sample could allow for the expansion of the scope of the project beyond South Asia.

Second, interviews with both policy makers and respondents could help better define the mechanisms. Policy makers could help clarify the link between public opinion and their actions. What role do affiliations and the publics knowledge or perception of these relationships shape their actions? Further, if the survey was administered by enumerators, they could ask follow-up questions to better understand why respondents answered the way they did. Did respondents pick up on the role of affiliate groups? The experiment necessarily abstracts away from asking directly about support for political violence groups, so any further probing can be enlightening.

Given the natural social desirability bias in surveys about political violence, an alternative design could also prove informative. For example, a design in which respondents actually got the opportunity to pick a charity to donate money to would be more indicative of tangible support than self-reported support for a policy. By linking charities to well-known clerics or leaders who support affiliate groups and parent organizations, the actual action of providing support could be better measured.

CHAPTER 6

6. Empirical II: Further Effects on Violence[18]

6.1 Empirical Analysis

According to the theory, when the potential costs of a crackdown post-pledging are high enough, the act of pledging can act as a costly signal. This is represented by the separating and semi-separating equilibrium in Figure 1 below. However, when the costs are low, there exists a pooling equilibrium in which all groups (or significantly more groups, empirically) can pledge, because the cost to bluff is so low. This is when groups will have to outbid one another post-pledging in order to distinguish themselves.

In the case of al-Qaeda as a parent organization, when groups pledge allegiance, they become part of the parent organization's shared goal. They can now compete for resources from those Salafi-jihadists who wish to follow this very well-known goal (Byman, 2012). It is a choice to pledge, and not all Salafi terrorist groups do. However, when the market becomes over-saturated and those pledged groups face competition for support from this audience, they follow an outbidding pattern of violence to distinguish their group.

[18] A version of this chapter is published: Farrell, Megan (2020). The Logic of Transnational Outbidding: Pledging Allegiance and the Escalation of Violence. *Journal of Peace Research.* Volume 57 Issue 3: 437-451.

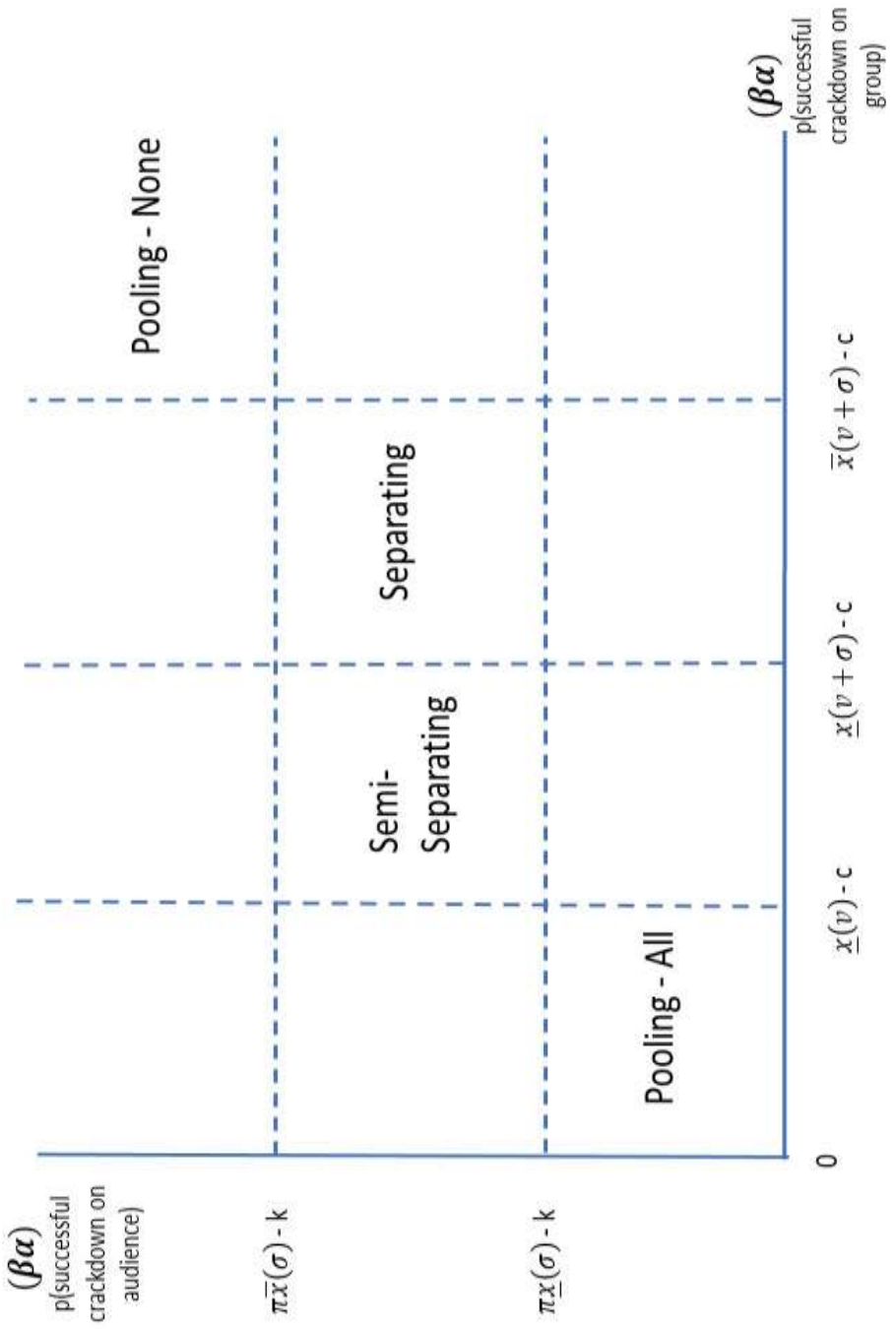

Figure 18: Equilibrium Space

More specifically, when groups pledge allegiance to al-Qaeda, they adopt the parent organization's specific goal based on Salafi-jihadist ideology. This is a more defined shared ideology. New pledges often must publicly declare bay'at, or allegiance, to their parent organization, so they are aware of their direct competition (Byman, 2014). Though all Salafi-jihadists seek to re-establish the Caliphate, there is often disagreement on exactly what the ideology entails. al-Qaeda has been consistent about their ultimate goal – a pan-Islamic caliphate built through anti-western rhetoric and attacks (Jones, 2014). ISIS, conversely, seeks to hold land in order to immediately establish the caliphate (Wood, 2015). Non-affiliated Salafi-jihadists often prioritize forming their own, local Salafi empire when operating without a parent organization (Byman, 2010).

By choosing to pledge, more support and resources, such as foreign fighters and foreign financing from those following the specific goal of al-Qaeda, can further be secured by affiliate groups. Those wanting to fight the brand of Salafi-jihadism that al-Qaeda popularized often send their support to affiliate groups carrying on this fight, as the core parent organizations carry out less and less of their own attacks (Byman, 2012).

While affiliates can still recruit locally and seek out resources from traditional external sources, such as state sponsorship, affiliation gives them access to an even more valuable transnational audience based on this ideology. These international resources coming from individuals are fairly unique to this type of transnational terrorism. For example, individuals radicalized at home by al-Qaeda websites can now join a group as a foreign fighter (Malet, 2013). No geographical ties are necessary, and the worldwide goal is more accessible to individual fighters and funders. These unique resources are furthermore very valuable. The most capable foreign fighters or the best endowed funders want to make the most impact. Like any

labor market, they want to fight for the most capable group in the best arena. al-Qaeda have established this well-known brand that groups can cultivate over the years (Mendelsohn, 2016).

Accordingly, when the costs of pledging lowered in 2011 (see Figure 19 and Chapter 2 for further discussion), there was a sharp increase in the number of pledged groups. This period is when we observe this outbidding pattern. Even though groups must send this extra outbidding signal when the market is saturated, the value of the al-Qaeda resources discussed above is so great and unique, committed groups are willing to do so when necessary. While pledging matters as a signal, the count of pledged groups (or the level of competition) has further implications. These effects can be observed in the number of types of attacks groups choose to undertake post-pledging and how these choices vary overtime as the number of pledged groups fluctuate.

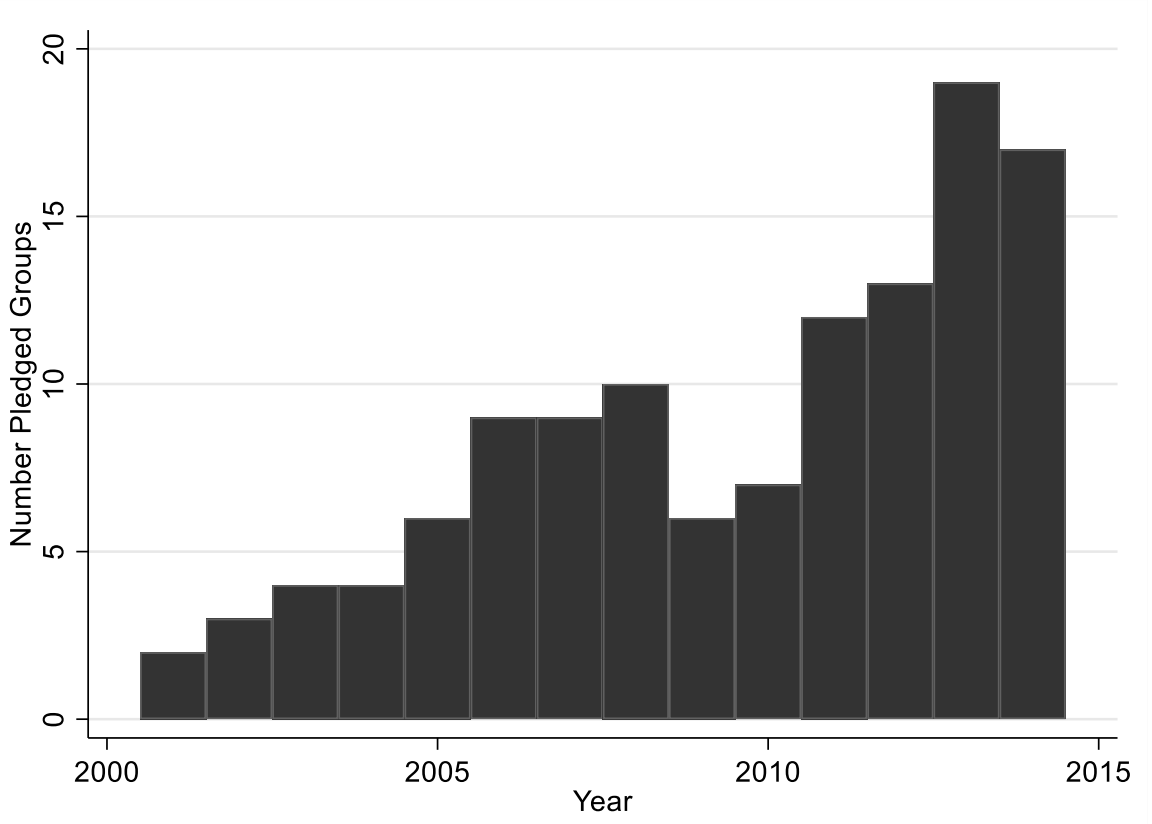

Figure 19: # Pledged groups by year

Hypothesis 5 states: *When the costs of pledging lessen starting in 2011, pledged groups commit more attacks as competition rises.* I find strong support for this interactive effect among pledged groups. Figure 3 displays the predicted number of events as the number of groups actually pledged to al-Qaeda fluctuates.[19] As discussed, we should expect groups that have pledged (pledge=1) to respond the most to increases in competition during times when the costs of pledging are lowest. This corresponds to the time period of 2011-2014, as discussed in chapter 2. Figure 19 demonstrates that during this time period, 12 or greater groups were pledged to al-Qaeda.

[19] Given the interest is # of attacks at different levels of competition, I present the results graphically. A full regression table can be found in the Appendix.

As evidenced in Figure 20, when costs of pledging were high pre-2011, there are low levels of competition along the X-axis. The outbidding effect does not exist during this time period, as a small number of attacks by any given group is predicted. Additionally, when competition is low, pledged and non-pledged groups are not statistically distinguishable. This is in line with the theory that pledging served as a credible signal during this time period when the costs imposed upon pledged groups were high. No further outbidding signal of strength was needed.

However, as costs lower and competition grows, groups that are currently pledged to al-Qaeda respond the most. In 2012, when 13 Salafi-jihadi groups were pledged to al-Qaeda, these pledged groups are expected to commit more attacks compared to non-pledged Salafi-jihadist groups, a significant difference. In 2013 when 19 groups were pledged, the highest level of competition observed, pledged groups are predicted to commit over double the amount of attacks as non-pledged Salafi-jihadist groups. Evidence for an interactive effect between # Pledged Groups and pledging on the number of suicide attacks (Hypothesis 6) is not statistically significant, perhaps because suicide attacks are so rare in general.

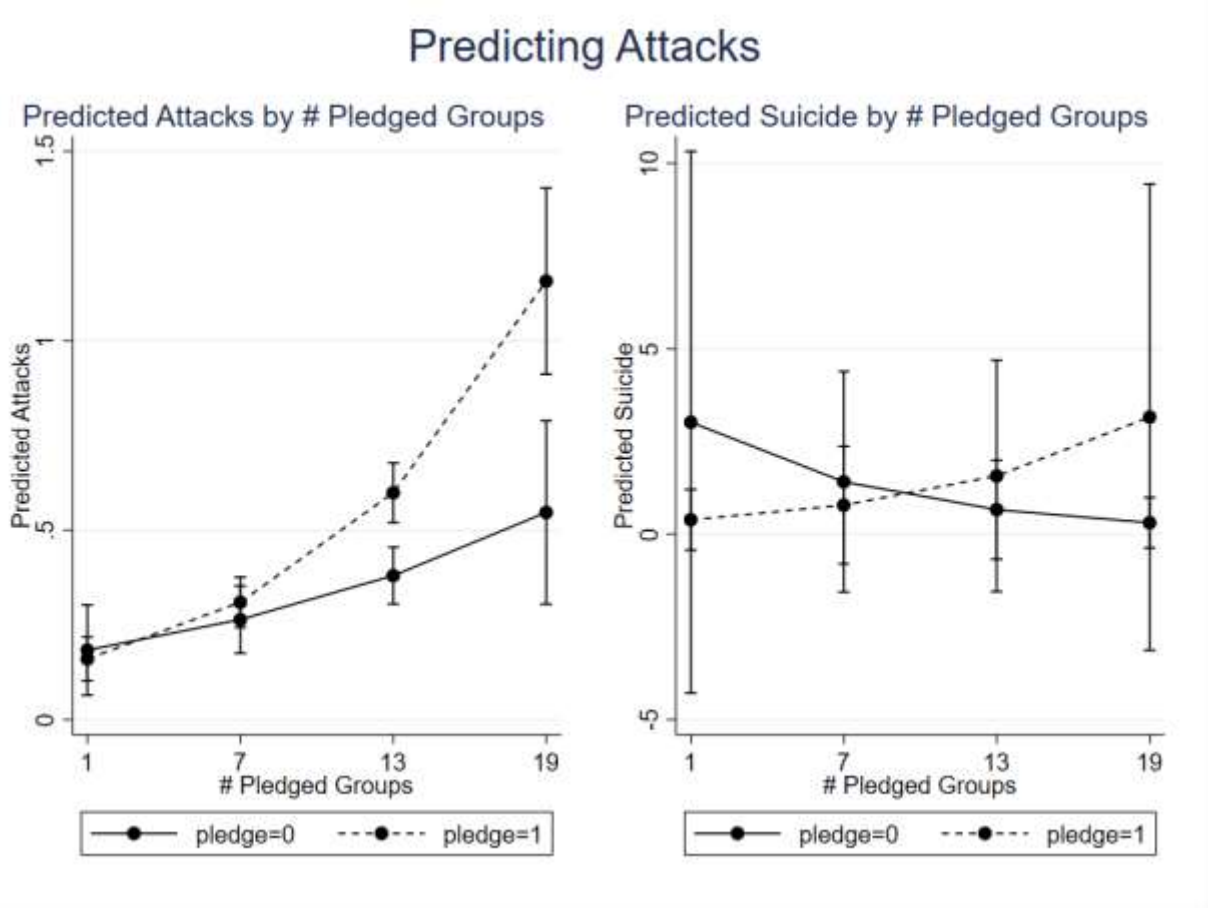

Figure 20: Predicted attacks by pledged group status

Again, I explore the interactive effect of competition and pledging in relation to severity of attacks. Figure 21 provides support for Hypothesis 7, in which I expect pledged groups in the most competitive environments (post-2011 when 12+ groups are pledged) to conduct the most severe attacks. In Figure 21, when competition is low, the probability a group selects the most severe type of attack is below 20% among both pledged and non-pledged groups. However, as competition grows among al-Qaeda pledges to 19 groups, pledged groups are more than 60% likely to select the most severe type of attack. This is significantly distinguishable from non-pledged groups, which are only 30% likely to select the most severe type of attack when competition is at its highest.[20] This same effect holds when assessing 'shock value' as more extreme target selection. Overall, there is a strong interactive effect indicating pledged groups, who are in direct competition with one another, must resort to outbidding when competition becomes overly saturated due to lower costs of pledging.

[20] Corresponding Regression table can be found in the Appendix.

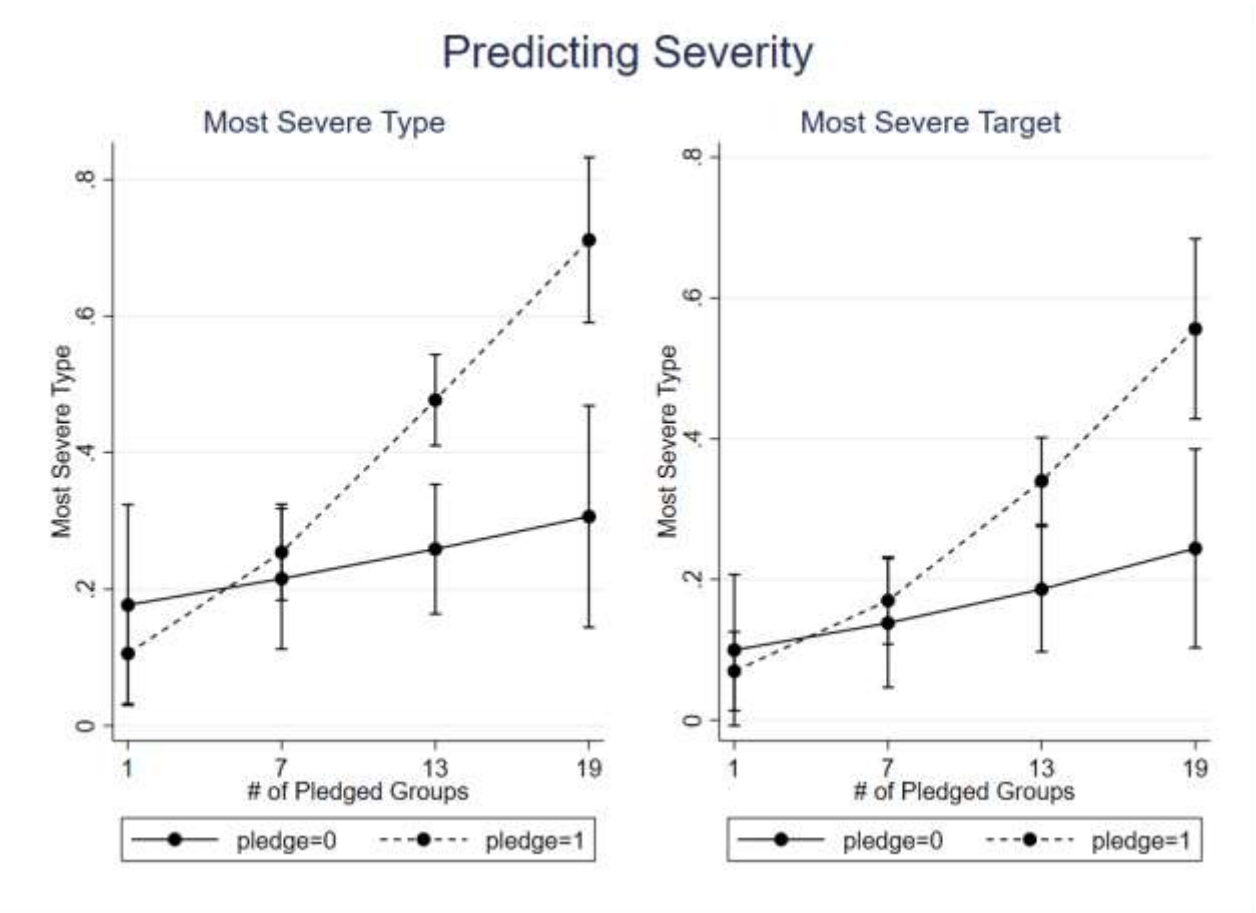

Figure 21: Predicted attack severity by pledged group status

6.2 ILLUSTRATIVE CASE

I include an illustrative case below that traces the mechanism through one organization. I look at a specific group, the Abdallah Azzam Brigades (AAB), colloquially known as al-Qaeda in Lebanon, as a way to isolate the mechanism of transnational outbidding. Following Lieberman (2005), because the results of the large-n statistical analysis conformed to my hypotheses, I pick an 'on-the-line' case for a small-N analyses to assess the plausibility of observed statistical relationships between variables. As it has existed since 2004, its behavior can be observed before and after pledging, which further aids in causal inference.

According to the mechanism, AAB should respond to competition to the most extreme degree when they are pledged and when the number of pledged groups is high. They must increase their visibility in order to demonstrate their capabilities and shift resources to their own conflict arena. In turn, they should receive resources from al-Qaeda's audience in response to this outbidding activity. Indeed, AAB altered its strategy and increased its attacks and severity post-pledging in response to rising competition, and correspondingly received increased resources.

AAB formed in 2004, undertaking a few minor attacks in the Sinai Peninsula in 2004 and 2005. They ceased violent operations until 2009, when they returned and pledged allegiance to al-Qaeda (Mackenzie Institute, 2015). This action was met with immediate counterterrorism initiatives from countries such as Israel and Saudi Arabia naming their leader to their most-wanted lists (Barnett 2013). AAB initially abided by bin Laden's instructions to affiliate groups to rein in violence against civilians (Lahoud, 2013). With competition at a lower level in 2009 and 2010, the group specifically called for peaceful protests in Syria against the al-Assad government, with its leader Majid bin Muhammad al Majid pleading, 'Stay away from that

which repulses people and makes them stop demonstrating and stop supporting the peaceful and armed revolution' (Roggio, 2012). This brought them favor with bin Laden and helped them secure finances and fighters post-pledging (Barnett 2013).

However, after other al-Qaeda affiliate groups, such as the al-Nursa Front and Ahrar al-Sham, entered the Salafi-jihad fight starting in late 2011, AAB switched their tactics. The videos calling for peace ceased. These new affiliate groups were known to be excessively violent, with the al-Nursa Front heavily utilizing suicide attacks and Ahrar al-Sham known to target Syrian soldiers (Roggio, 2013; Cassman, 2019). Furthermore, there was known to be a great competition among these groups, with al-Zawahiri having to step in to stop the infighting amongst pledged groups more than once. al-Zawahiri even went as far as to threaten the formation of an arbitration body to address competition between groups who should be acting as 'brothers' (ICT, 2013).

These groups entered the pledging arena in 2011, when the costs of an associated crackdown lowered significantly. With only pledging not working anymore to distinguish AAB from these other groups, al Majid stopped calling for restraint and the group switched to more violent measures. For example, the group undertook a suicide attack in Syria in late 2011, killing 40 people. Majid released a notable statement urging jihadists to follow him in taking up arms to defeat the apostates in early 2012. Since then, AAB have upped the quantity and severity of its attacks. They are responsible for several deadly, high-profile attacks all around the Middle East. In 2012, a suicide bomber attacked a police station in Pakistan. In Beirut in 2013, suicide bombers from AAB struck again, killing 22 at the Iranian embassy (BBC, 2013). This international pattern of attacks lends further evidence to a transnational outbidding

campaign, rather than outbidding within the group's home country or within the context of a civil war, such as Syria.

Beyond these specific attacks, AAB's general pattern of attack quantities and severity have followed the trend of al-Qaeda affiliates outbidding one another as competition grew. Figure 22 demonstrates AAB's attack quantity in response to competition by year. The number of pledged groups by year is in black, with the number of AAB attacks by year in gray. At the time of pledging, competition was at a low level. There were 6 pledged affiliates to al-Qaeda in 2009 and 7 in 2010. Correspondingly, the group undertook few attacks. This was in line with the directives of its parent organization.

Starting in 2011, there was a sharp increase in competition, with the number of pledged groups rising to 12. Again, these groups in the competition, such as the al-Nursa Front and Ahrar al-Sham, were also excessively violent. AAB correspondingly switched their tactics to more violence in response to this pressure by other affiliates and more than doubled their number of attacks per year in 2011 and increased fourfold by 2013. [21]

[21] In the Appendix, Figure provides evidence of the same pattern with the alternative independent variable measuring attack severity.

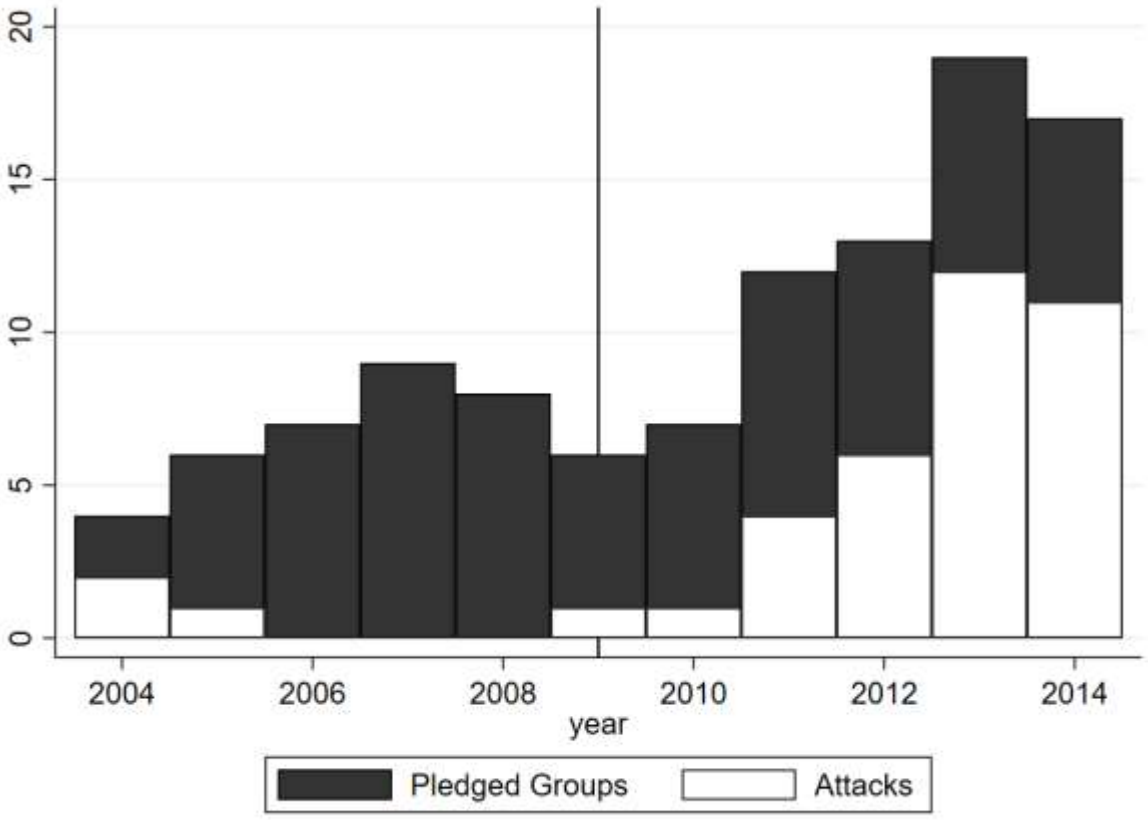

Figure 22: AAB attack quantity and competition, 2004-2014

Given both competition and AAB's outbidding patterns of violence increased in 2011, we should observe an influx of resources, such as funding and foreign fighters, starting in 2011 and growing as the group becomes more visible with its increased violence. Notably, these resources did not come until the switch in tactics, even though the group pledged in 2009. This is because the visibility of the group greatly increased after they began outbidding. The group became so prolific for both its fundraising ability and as a destination for foreign fighters, the United States added AAB to the list of foreign terrorists in 2013 (Reuters, 2014).

In a 2011 video after AAB's first massively violent attack in Syria, Majid thanked the new 'philanthropists and Muslim merchants' that funded the group and urged them to give more. Furthermore, it is estimated more than 1,000 foreign fighters joined the group in 2011 after this attack. AAB had not previously been a destination for foreign fighters (Mortada, 2012). This uptick in resources continued as AAB's violence grew in response to further increases in competition and the notoriety of the group increased. The group not only continued to receive foreign fighters, but specifically was able to recruit fighters with French citizenship (Naharnet, 2014). The ability to recruit Western foreign fighters is a sign of prestige for al-Qaeda and ISIS affiliates (Weiss & Hassan, 2015). With an increased profile, AAB also continued to broaden its fundraising. By 2014, they expanded beyond their home country, using Kuwait as a central location for a wide array of fundraising goals, including funding anti-Assad forces in Syria and anti-Hezbollah forces in Lebanon and Palestine (Reuters, 2014).

In sum, as competition increased, AAB switched their attack patterns to follow an outbidding model. Because the costs of pledging were lower, allowing more groups to pledge, AAB had to differentiate themselves in order to receive the resources they sought as an affiliate of al-Qaeda. While the separating equilibrium give insight to the initial decision to affiliate, the

case of al-Qaeda and AAB demonstrate the more unique circumstance when costs lower and pledging no longer serves as a reliable signal. As discussed in the conclusion, these findings can give us policy insights into counterterrorism and counterinsurgency initiatives governments can undertake to deal with these groups.

CHAPTER 7

7. Conclusion

7.1 SUMMARY

At its core, this dissertation asks the question of: why do political violence groups makes the choice to affiliate with a parent organization? This act of affiliation is puzzling because once a group affiliates with a better-known parent organization, they open themselves up to the same crackdown their parent organization faces. Indeed, groups that affiliate with al-Qaeda or ISIS are subjected to mandatory UN sanctions. Groups that affiliate with the UNLFW in Northeast India come under shoot-to-kill orders.

I present a theoretical argument which contends groups leverage these high costs in order to demonstrate their commitment to the parent organization. When groups pledge allegiance to a parent organization, they have the potential to receive new resources from the parent organization and the audience that follows them. Parent Organizations cultivate a broad base of support, as they have an expanded goal which extends beyond their own local group needs. For example, al-Qaeda has generated a transnational Salafi Islam ideology which generates a global audience of potential supporters. The UNLFW fights for the sovereignty rights of all groups in Northeast India, rather than just their own group's rights. This garners them a transnational or regional audience and grows the base of potential supporters. These potential supporters can funnel resources, such as fighters, finances, or public support and legitimacy, to political violence groups that affiliate with the parent organization with whom the supporters align.

Yet, because these resources are so valuable, there is a strong incentive for affiliate groups to bluff. A group could pledge allegiance to a parent organization in order to receive resources, yet not subscribe to or pursue the expanded goals (e.g. transnational Salafi Islam or

regional Sovereignty rights) that the parent organization and its audience are pursuing. This is not preferable to the parent organization nor its audience.

Utilizing a formal model in Chapter 2, I demonstrate that affiliation can serve as a costly signal of a group's commitment. When the costs of affiliation are high enough, only groups that are committed to the parent organization's expanded goals are willing to send the signal of affiliation and risk the associated crackdown. Affiliation serves as a mechanism to separate out types of groups. When a group chooses to pledge allegiance, they give information to the parent organization and its audience of potential supporters from which they can update their priors about the type of group which is affiliating. The groups that are willing to send the signal of affiliation and risk the costs can demonstrate their commitment. Thus, the supporters can know with greater certainty they are dealing with their preferred type of group and are willing to send resources to the affiliate.

Chapter 4 finds empirical support for this costly signal mechanism. Utilizing data collected to measure the affiliations present between rebel, terrorist, and militia groups in India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan from 1970 through 2015, I find support for two observable implications of the formal model. First, the potential costs of a crackdown from both domestic and international governments dictate the decision to affiliate, in general. On average, as the potential costs of a crackdown rise, groups are less likely to affiliate. The general group is not willing or unable to bear these high costs.

Second, I examine the which groups do indeed choose to affiliate, finding that as costs increase, the expanded groups are significantly more likely to be the type of group that actually do affiliate. As the signal becomes costlier to send, local groups are not willing to pay those costs to bluff. At these higher costs, only the committed or expanded types are willing to send

this affiliation signal and incur these potential costs. Indeed, studying the interaction between the level of potential costs and the choice to affiliate, I find that groups that choose to affiliate at higher costs are significantly more likely to have an expanded goal types.

In sum, affiliation as a signal can mitigate the circumstances in which groups will try to bluff and pretend to be committed to the parent organization through stating their goals as expanded even when they are local. The signal of affiliation can demonstrate that a group is willing to pay costs in order to demonstrate they are the committed type, allowing potential supporters to send resources to affiliate groups they presume to be the type of groups they want to support.

Two fundamental assumptions underwrote these findings: First, that governments in fact do have a greater potential to impose crackdown costs on groups post-affiliation. Second, the audience of potential supporters recognizes this potential crackdown as a costly signal and this is the mechanism behind these supporters offering resources to groups post-affiliation, rather tan other ties to the group.

Chapter 5 utilizes a survey experiment to probe these assumptions further. Because asking respondents about their support for political violence groups will be affected by biases, such as social desirability bias, I use designs intended to mitigate these biases. The surveys were distributed to ~1,000 respondents in India and Pakistan in July 2019. Respondents were given information about policies and asked to respond with their support-level. Information was manipulated in different versions of the vignettes as the treatment.

First, to explore the costs of a crackdown associated with affiliation, I utilize a vignette that asks respondents to quantify their support for counter-terrorism or counter-insurgency resources implemented by their home government. They were given different information about

whether the groups threatening the security of their country were affiliated with a parent organization or not. Because I cannot directly ask if respondents support these affiliated groups more, I instead investigate the degree to which they support investing in resources to counter these groups. I find that, across the general samples, respondents support increased counter-terrorism or insurgency measures if they received information about affiliate groups. This indicates that affiliation is indeed costly, as affiliate groups will face harsher measures.

The second vignette utilized an endorsement design, in which respondents were asked about support for a policy proposal. Whether that policy was endorsed by a parent organization and its affiliates was randomly manipulated. Further, if the affiliate groups had religious or other cultural ties to the region (another possible mechanism of support) or if the affiliates were facing backlash for their actions (a costly signal) was manipulated. I find limited support for the hypothesis that respondents will recognize this costly signal and offer more support for policies with an endorsing group. This result only holds among respondents in conflict-affected regions, though these are the locations of respondents that should be expected to support political violence groups at higher rates, as they are more directly affected by conflict. Though neither design is able to directly test the assumptions of the model, both provide initial support that the mechanisms proposed are indeed present.

Chapter 6 extends upon the core question to ask: what are the effects on the violent attacks of groups post-pledging? Leveraging the uniqueness of the al-Qaeda sample, particularly post-2011, I explore the changes in patterns of violence among al-Qaeda affiliates as the level of competition (or number of affiliate groups) fluctuates. When the costs of affiliation were low, I find an increase in the number of pledged groups, mapping onto the pooling equilibrium. Because the market of affiliate groups was too crowded, affiliation in its own right did not serve

as a signal with enough information to distinguish committed groups from bluffing groups. The audience could not know which groups to send resources to. Thus, groups had to find alternative ways to send a signal to differentiate themselves in order to get resources during this time period. This is in line with the pooling equilibrium, in which affiliation is not actually a signal.

I find evidence of transnational outbidding among al-Qaeda affiliate groups when competition was at its highest levels. By changing the numbers and intensity of their attacks, groups could use their attack profiles to distinguish themselves. More spectacular attacks demonstrate the higher capabilities of the group, allowing supporters to decide which affiliate group to send resources to based on this signal in addition to the affiliation signal.

In the rest of this chapter, I discuss three broader implications of this dissertation. First, I highlight the policy implications. Second, I discuss the impact of understanding affiliation, or vertical alliances, on the conventional alliance literature within the civil conflict arena. Lastly, moving beyond the typical focus on the relationships between states as the focus of IR literature, I discuss the implications of this theory on the traditional state-building literature.

7.2 Broader Implications

7.2.1 Policy Implications

The case of al-Qaeda can help highlight a key policy implication of this theory, given that al-Qaeda's choice to accept pledges or not has long been a focal point of the counterterrorism literature on affiliation. Policy makers have projected three potential paths for the al-Qaeda affiliate network: A strong core, an affiliate-driven network, and a dispersed al-Qaeda led by "lone wolves." Each paradigm suggests a different counterterrorism approach.

A strong, centralized core would dictate a policy in which the central leadership of al-Qaeda is targeted and attacked. By degrading the hub, the spokes would be cut off from the

leader and be forced to operate more independently. An affiliate-led network suggests the need to disperse counterterrorism tools and try to mitigate attacks on the homeland. By containing affiliate attacks to their local region, governments can limit their reach. A lone wolf version of al-Qaeda would necessitate each government utilizing their own domestic tools to track and stop local individuals. Yet, these three paths do not account for the audience, or potential supports, of the parent organization's brand and their ability to send resources to affiliate groups (Nelson & Sanderson 2011).

Scenario one assumes affiliate resources only come directly from the parent organization. Scenario two assumes affiliate resources are all local. Scenario three is focused only on individual's choice to join in the first place and not as relevant to this theory. In each case, the expanded goals of the parent organization and their ability to use this brand to generate a broad base of supporters who can transcend local group or geographical borders is not considered. Consequently, this unnecessarily narrows the argument to whether the core (hub) or affiliates (spokes) should be targeted.

Yet, as demonstrated by this theory, there are actors involved beyond just the parent organization and the affiliate group. The audience and their set of valuable resources plays a key role in the decision to affiliate. They generate the base of support cultivated by the parent organization which makes the parent organization desirable in the first place. They also distribute these resources to the affiliate group, which makes affiliation worth the risk.

By moving away from the binary decision of targeting the hub or the spokes, new counterterrorism options arise. Policy makers can focus on cutting off the flow of resources from the audience of the parent organization to the affiliate groups. Cutting of these resources will take away the incentive to affiliate in the first place. Affiliation would always be too costly

if these resources did not exist. By eliminating these relationships before they begin, rather than deciding to direct initiatives at one side (the parent organization or the affiliates) after the fact, the policy can influence both sides simultaneously. The parent organization will be affected by not getting affiliates in the first place. The affiliates will be affected by not getting the chance to increase their resources. In sum, considering the outside actor (the supporters) can open new avenues of often less-violent policies that pre-empt affiliation rather than trying to catch up to the relationship after it is formed.

7.2.2 Implications for Alliances in Civil Conflict

This theory has implications beyond counterterrorism or al-Qaeda specific concerns. First, there are considerably more strategic factors that determine this decision to form a vertical alliance, as we see with affiliation. Previous literature utilized ideas like shared identity or power considerations as the building blocks for why groups form alliances. As a result, alliances in the civil conflict literature are often viewed as agreements to maximize the chance of winning and to secure the best outcome after conflict. But two key issues arise with this thinking.

First, while notions that groups with the same identity or ideology or groups that need to increase their power will form alliances together gives us a baseline condition for the formation of these relationships, they do not shed light on the specific conditions under which groups would choose *not* to form an alliance. For example, if a group in a civil war seeks to over throw the domestic leader, these theories would bring a basic understanding as to why that group would form an alliance with other groups who wish to overthrow that leader based on shared goals and power considerations.

But the choice to *not* form an alliance, especially under circumstances where it has benefits, is just as strategic. In exploring the depth of these alliances beyond a horizontal level, I offer a possible explanation. Groups who do not want to or cannot pay the costs associated with joining an alliance with a parent organization, even though they share an ideology and have the potential for resource accumulation, will choose to not pursue this relationship.

Second, the groups that form horizontal alliances are often interchangeable. For example, any shared ideology could generate an alliance or any group can be part of a coalition, as long as it helps meets the minimum winning criteria. The specific groups have much less importance. Yet, the relationship between parent organizations and their affiliates demonstrates the specific group is integral to the decision to join a vertical alliance. It is the parent organizations better-known brand and their ability to leverage this brand to develop a broad base of supporters with a wealth of potential resources which makes affiliation desirable in the first place, even in the midst of high costs of a crackdown. In leveraging the depth of ties, we have deeper understanding into the role specific groups play in generating and maintaining these alliances.

7.2.3 Implications for International Relations Theory

International Relations (IR) theory traditionally focuses on relationships between states. Starting with Waltz's (1979) theory of international politics, debates within the paradigms of IR focused on if the assertion of anarchy as a driving factor behind the interactions between states and if this assumption is tenable. Accordingly, the theories of state-building in IR traditionally rely on how negotiations of institutional orders by states in the international system can overcome the effects of anarchy.

However, this theory explores how political violence groups, operating within states and challenging their own domestic governments as well as other governments beyond their borders, affects this same state-building process. States form alliances, coalitions, and hierarchies as a means to increase capacity and legitimacy in pursuance of state-building. Through vertical alliances, political violence groups increase their own capacity and legitimacy to challenge this same process, both within their own state and transnationally.

The negotiations of institutional orders affecting state-building between states can also include political violence groups, nested in layers below the state-to-state. This theory falls in line with a growing body of literature within the civil conflict arena asserting that these groups have the potential to redefine the structure from below. Affiliation can serve as a mechanism for coordinating the legitimacy and capabilities needed to do so.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Chapter 2 Appendix

Proposition 1: Semi-separating

If G has expanded goals, G pledges

If G has local goals, G pledges with probability r* and ~ pledge with probability 1-r*.

If G ~ pledge, A believes G is local type (Φ'=0) and ~ support

If G pledges, A believes Φ'=μ and supports with probability f* and ~ support with probability 1-f*

Proof of Proposition 1

Begin with the local type of G with goal $\underline{x}$, rendered indifferent by A's strategy of randomizing whether to support after a pledge, such that $EU_G(\text{pledge}|\underline{x}) = EU_G(\sim \text{pledge}|\underline{x})$. That requires the probability of A supporting after a pledge (f):

$$f\big(\underline{x}(\rho + v + \sigma) - \beta\alpha\big) - c\big) + (1 - f)\big(\underline{x}(\rho + v) - c\big) = \underline{x}(\rho)$$

yielding:

$$f^* = \frac{c - \underline{x}(v)}{\underline{x}(\sigma) - \beta\alpha)}$$

ensuring f* between [0,1], it must be the case that:

$$\underline{x}(v + \sigma) \geq c + \beta\alpha \geq \underline{x}(v)$$

Next, verifying that the expanded type of G will pledge:

$EU_G(\text{pledge}|\overline{x}) \geq EU_G(\sim \text{pledge}|\overline{x})$.

Given A's strategy, this inequality is satisfied when:

$$f^*(\overline{x}(\rho + v + \sigma) - \beta\alpha) - c) + (1 - f^*)(\overline{x}(\rho + v) - c) \geq \overline{x}(p)$$

Which is true by assumption as long as $\overline{x} > \underline{x}$

Next, given G's strategies, we verify that A's beliefs are consistent and strategies are optimal. If G ~ pledge, A believes G to be local type (Φ'=0) and will not support, implying $EU_A(\sim \text{support}|\sim \text{pledge}) \geq EU_A(\text{support}|\sim \text{pledge})$, represented by:

$$\pi\underline{x}(\rho) \geq \pi\underline{x}(\rho + \sigma) - k$$

which is true when:

$$k \geq \pi\underline{x}(\sigma)$$

Lastly, if G pledges, A is rendered indifferent between support and ~ support by the probability with which the local type pledges (r*), such that $EU_A(\text{support} \mid \text{pledge}) = EU_A(\sim\text{support} \mid \text{pledge})$. By Bayes' Rule, A's posterior belief that G is an expanded goal type is:

$$\Phi' = \frac{\Phi}{\Phi + (1 - \Phi)\text{r}} \equiv \mu$$

therefore, A is indifferent when:

$$\mu(\pi\overline{x}(\rho+v+\sigma)-\beta\alpha)-k)+(1-\mu)\big(\pi\underline{x}(\rho+v+\sigma)-\beta\alpha)-k\big)$$

$$=\ \mu(\pi\overline{x}(\rho+v)+(1-\mu)\left(\pi\underline{x}(\rho+v)\right)$$

which yields the local group's probability of pledging:

$$r*=\frac{\Phi(\pi\overline{x}(\sigma)-\beta\alpha)-k)}{-(1-\Phi)(\pi\underline{x}(\sigma)-\beta\alpha)-k)}$$

ensuring r* between [0,1],

$$\pi\overline{x}(\sigma)\geq k+\beta\alpha\geq\pi\underline{x}(\sigma)$$

Proposition 2: separating

G pledges if expanded goals

G ~ pledge if local goals

If G pledges, A believes $\Phi' = 1$ and supports

If G ~ pledge, A believes $\Phi' = 0$ and ~ support

Proof of Proposition 2

The expanded group pledges when $U_G(\text{pledge}|\overline{x}) \geq U_G(\sim \text{pledge}|\overline{x})$ and the local group ~ pledge when $EU_G(\text{pledge}|\underline{x}) \geq EU_G(\sim \text{pledge}|\underline{x})$. These are simultaneously true when:

$$\overline{x}(v + \sigma) \geq c + \beta\alpha \geq \underline{x}(v + \sigma)$$

which is true by assumption, as $\overline{x} > \underline{x}$

Because types of G perfectly separate, A posterior beliefs are $\Phi' = 1$ if G pledges and $\Phi' = 0$ if G ~ pledge. A will thus support if $EU_A(\text{support} \mid \text{pledge}) \geq EU_A(\sim\text{support} \mid \text{pledge})$:

$$\pi\overline{x}(\rho + v + \sigma) - \beta\alpha) - k \geq \pi\overline{x}(p + v)$$

which is true when:

$$k + \beta\alpha \leq \pi\overline{x}(\sigma)$$

A will ~ support a local group such that $EU_A(\sim\text{support} \mid \sim\text{pledge}) \geq EU_A(\text{support} \mid \sim\text{pledge})$, or:

$$\pi\underline{x}(\rho) \geq \pi\underline{x}(p + \sigma) - k$$

which is true when:

$$k \geq \pi\underline{x}(\sigma)$$

Proposition 3: Pooling - All

Both types of G pledge

If G pledges, A believes $\Phi' = \Phi$ and supports

If G ~ pledge, A believes $\Phi'' = 1$ and ~ supports

Proof of Proposition 3

Beginning with A's strategy to support when G pledges and ~ support when G ~ pledge. When G pledges, A chooses to support when EU_A (support | pledge) $\geq$ EU_A (~support | pledge), or:

$$\Phi(\pi\overline{x}(\rho + v + \sigma - \beta\alpha) - k) + (1 - \Phi)(\pi\underline{x}(\rho + v + \sigma - \beta\alpha) - k)$$

$$\geq \Phi(\pi\overline{x}(\rho + v) + (1 - \Phi)(\pi\underline{x}(\rho + v))$$

where A's posterior belief is the same as its prior, $\Phi' = \Phi$. This inequality is satisfied when:

$$\Phi \geq \frac{\pi\underline{x}(\sigma) - \beta\alpha) - k}{((\pi\overline{x}(\sigma) - \beta\alpha) - k) - (\pi\underline{x}(\sigma) - \beta\alpha) - k))}$$

ensuring Φ between [0,1],

$$\pi\underline{x}(\sigma) \geq k + \beta\alpha$$

Next, A ~support when it's posterior, out of equilibrium belief that G is local is Φ'', meaning EU_A (~support | ~pledge) > EU_A (support | ~pledge), or:

$$\Phi''(\pi\underline{x}(\rho) + (1 - \Phi'')(\pi\overline{x}(\rho) \geq \Phi''\left(\pi\underline{x}(\rho + \sigma) - k\right) + (1 - \Phi'')(\pi\overline{x}(\rho + \sigma) - k)$$

this inequality is satisfied for any out of equilibrium beliefs Φ'' when:

$$\Phi'' \leq \frac{\pi\overline{x}(\sigma) - k}{(\pi\overline{x}(\sigma) - k) - (\pi\underline{x}(\sigma) - k)}$$

ensuring Φ'' between [0,1],

$$\pi\overline{x}(\sigma) > k > \pi\underline{x}(\sigma)$$

Next, the local type of G will pledge when U_G(pledge | $\underline{x}$) ≥ U_G(~pledge | $\underline{x}$), or:

$$\underline{x}(\rho + v + \sigma) - \beta\alpha) - c \geq \underline{x}(\rho)$$

Lastly, the expanded type of G will pledge when U_G(pledge | $\overline{x}$) ≥ U_G(~pledge |$\overline{x}$), or:

$$\overline{x}(\rho + v + \sigma) - \beta\alpha) - c \geq \overline{x}(\rho)$$

Taken together, these inequalities hold when:

$$\underline{x}(v + \sigma) \geq c + \beta\alpha$$

Proposition 4: Pooling - None

Both types of G ~pledge

If G ~ pledge, A believes $\Phi' = \Phi$ and ~supports

If G pledges, A believes $\Phi'' = 1$ and supports

Proof of Proposition 4

Beginning with A's strategy to ~support when G ~pledge and support when G pledges. When G ~pledge, A chooses to ~support when EU_A (~support | ~pledge) > EU_A (support | ~pledge), or:

$$\Phi(\pi\underline{x}(\rho)) + (1-\Phi)(\pi\overline{x}(\rho)) \geq \Phi\big(\pi\underline{x}(\rho+\sigma) - k\big) + (1-\Phi)(\pi\overline{x}(\rho+\sigma) - k)$$

where A's posterior belief is the same as its prior, $\Phi' = \Phi$. This inequality is satisfied when:

$$\Phi \leq \frac{\pi\overline{x}(\sigma) - k}{(\pi\overline{x}(\sigma) - k) - (\pi\underline{x}(\sigma) - k)}$$

ensuring Φ between [0,1],

$$\pi\overline{x}(\sigma) > k > \pi\underline{x}(\sigma)$$

Next, A support when it's posterior, out of equilibrium belief that G is expanded is Φ'', meaning EU_A (support | pledge) > EU_A (~support | pledge), or:

$$\Phi''(\pi\overline{x}(\rho + v + \sigma - \beta\alpha) - k) + (1-\Phi'')(\pi\underline{x}(\rho + v + \sigma - \beta\alpha) - k)$$

$$\geq \Phi''(\pi\overline{x}(\rho + v) + (1-\Phi'')(\pi\underline{x}(\rho + v))$$

this inequality is satisfied for any out of equilibrium beliefs Φ'' when:

$$\Phi'' \geq \frac{\pi\underline{x}(\sigma) - \beta\alpha) - k}{((\pi\overline{x}(\sigma) - \beta\alpha) - k) - (\pi\underline{x}(\sigma) - \beta\alpha) - k))}$$

ensuring Φ'' between [0,1],

$$k + \beta\alpha \geq \pi\overline{x}(\sigma)$$

Next, the local type of G will pledge when U_G(~pledge | $\underline{x}$) ≥ U_G(pledge | $\underline{x}$), or:

$$\underline{x}(\rho) \geq \underline{x}(\rho + \sigma) - \beta\alpha) - c$$

Lastly, the expanded type of G will pledge when U_G(~pledge | $\overline{x}$) ≥ U_G(pledge |$\overline{x}$), or:

$$\overline{x}(\rho) \geq \overline{x}(\rho + v + \sigma) - \beta\alpha) - c$$

Taken together, these inequalities hold when:

$$c + \beta\alpha \geq \underline{x}\,(v + \sigma)$$

APPENDIX B

Chapter 4 Appendix

VARIABLES	(1) Military Capacity	(2) Governance Capacity	(3) Deny Support	(4) Political Terror
Military Expend	-0.06*	--	--	--
	(0.03)			
Tax/GDP	--	-0.11*	--	--
		(0.06)		
Support Denied	--	--	-0.50***	--
			(0.10)	
PT Score	--	--	--	0.07
				(0.12)
Splinter	0.08	0.09	0.14	0.09
	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)
Age	0.06***	0.06***	0.05***	0.06***
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Age2	-0.00**	-0.00**	-0.00**	-0.00**
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Terrorist	0.16*	0.16*	0.21**	0.16*
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)
Alliances	0.06***	0.06***	0.05***	0.06***
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
War	0.69***	0.44*	0.67***	0.70***
	(0.21)	(0.25)	(0.21)	(0.21)
Polity	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)
GDPpc	0.00**	0.00***	0.00***	0.00***
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Population	0.14	0.10	0.10	0.11
	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.15)
Cold War	0.06	-0.17	-0.07	-0.33
	(1.19)	(1.20)	(1.15)	(1.15)
9/11	-1.11*	-1.36**	-1.31**	-1.26**
	(0.67)	(0.57)	(0.57)	(0.57)
Trade	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01	-0.00
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Constant	-3.42	-1.61	-2.37	-3.31
	(2.62)	(2.68)	(2.58)	(2.63)
Observations	2,752	2,752	2,752	2,724

Robust standard errors in parentheses
Country-Year FE excluded from Table
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Table B1: Predicting Affiliation with Domestic Costs – Country-Year Fixed Effects

VARIABLES	(1) US Troops	(2) US Troops dummy	(3) US Aid	(4) All Aid
# US Troops	-0.08**	--	--	--
	(0.03)			
US Troops Present	--	-0.61*	--	--
		(0.32)		
US Aid	--	--	-0.04***	--
			(0.02)	
International Aid	--	--	--	-0.01*
				(0.01)
Splinter	0.06	0.06	0.07	0.06
	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)
Age	0.04***	0.04***	0.04***	0.04***
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Age2	-0.00	-0.00	-0.00	-0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Terrorist	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11
	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)
Alliances	0.05***	0.05***	0.05***	0.05***
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
War	0.56***	0.56***	0.58***	0.60***
	(0.22)	(0.22)	(0.22)	(0.22)
Polity	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.01
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
GDPpc	0.18	0.19	0.19	0.19
	(0.14)	(0.14)	(0.14)	(0.14)
Population	-0.39	-0.43	-0.44	-0.45
	(1.19)	(1.19)	(1.17)	(1.17)
Cold War	0.23	0.13	0.19	0.11
	(0.32)	(0.31)	(0.31)	(0.31)
9/11	-1.06	-1.26	-0.29	-0.84
	(1.04)	(0.82)	(0.84)	(0.82)
Trade	0.06	0.06	0.07	0.06
	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)
Constant	-3.47	-3.78	-3.86	-3.94
	(2.56)	(2.55)	(2.54)	(2.54)
Observations	2,427	2,427	2,410	2,410

Robust standard errors in parentheses
Country-Year FE excluded from Table
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table B2: Predicting Affiliation with Intl Costs – Country-Year Fixed Effects

VARIABLES	(1) Military Capacity	(2) Governance Capacity	(3) Deny Support	(4) Political Terror
Military Expend	0.12*	--	--	--
	(0.09)			
Tax/GDP	--	-0.16**	--	--
		(0.08)		
Support Denied	--	--	-0.53***	--
			(0.11)	
PT Score	--	--	--	0.09
				(0.18)
Splinter	0.03	0.03	0.08	0.03
	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)
Age	0.05***	0.05***	0.04***	0.05***
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Age2	-0.00	-0.00	-0.00	-0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Terrorist	0.26***	0.25***	0.30***	0.26***
	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)
Alliances	0.15***	0.15***	0.14***	0.15***
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
War	0.84***	0.53	0.86***	0.94***
	(0.32)	(0.36)	(0.31)	(0.32)
Polity	0.08**	0.08**	0.08**	0.09**
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)
GDPpc	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Population	-0.03	-0.00	0.00	-0.01
	(0.36)	(0.18)	(0.18)	(0.18)
Cold War	-0.25	-0.24	-0.06	-0.11
	(1.93)	(1.24)	(1.20)	(1.22)
9/11	-1.70	-1.43	-1.63	-1.71
	(1.80)	(1.40)	(1.38)	(1.42)
Trade	-0.02*	-0.01	-0.02	-0.01
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Constant	-2.35	-0.20	-1.77	-2.49
	(4.28)	(3.55)	(3.46)	(3.52)
Observations	2,036	2,036	2,036	2,009

Robust standard errors in parentheses
Country-Year FE excluded from Table
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Table B3: Predicting Affiliation with Domestic Costs – Excluding Imputed Data

VARIABLES	(1) US Aid	(2) All Aid
US Aid	-0.03**	--
	(0.02)	
International Aid	--	0.05
		(0.18)
Splinter	0.05	0.05
	(0.11)	(0.11)
Age	0.03**	0.03**
	(0.02)	(0.02)
Age2	-0.00	-0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)
Terrorist	0.22**	0.22**
	(0.10)	(0.10)
Alliances	0.14***	0.14***
	(0.02)	(0.02)
War	1.08***	1.00***
	(0.31)	(0.33)
Polity	0.08**	0.09**
	(0.04)	(0.04)
GDPpc	0.05	0.03
	(0.18)	(0.18)
Population	-0.32	-0.01
	(1.23)	(1.22)
Cold War	-0.77	-1.61
	(1.34)	(1.33)
9/11	0.00	0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)
Trade	-0.02	-0.02
	(0.01)	(0.01)
Constant	-2.75	-2.70
	(3.44)	(3.47)
Observations	2,015	2,015

Robust standard errors in parentheses
Country-Year FE excluded from Table
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table B4: Predicting Affiliation with Intl Costs – Excluding Imputed Data

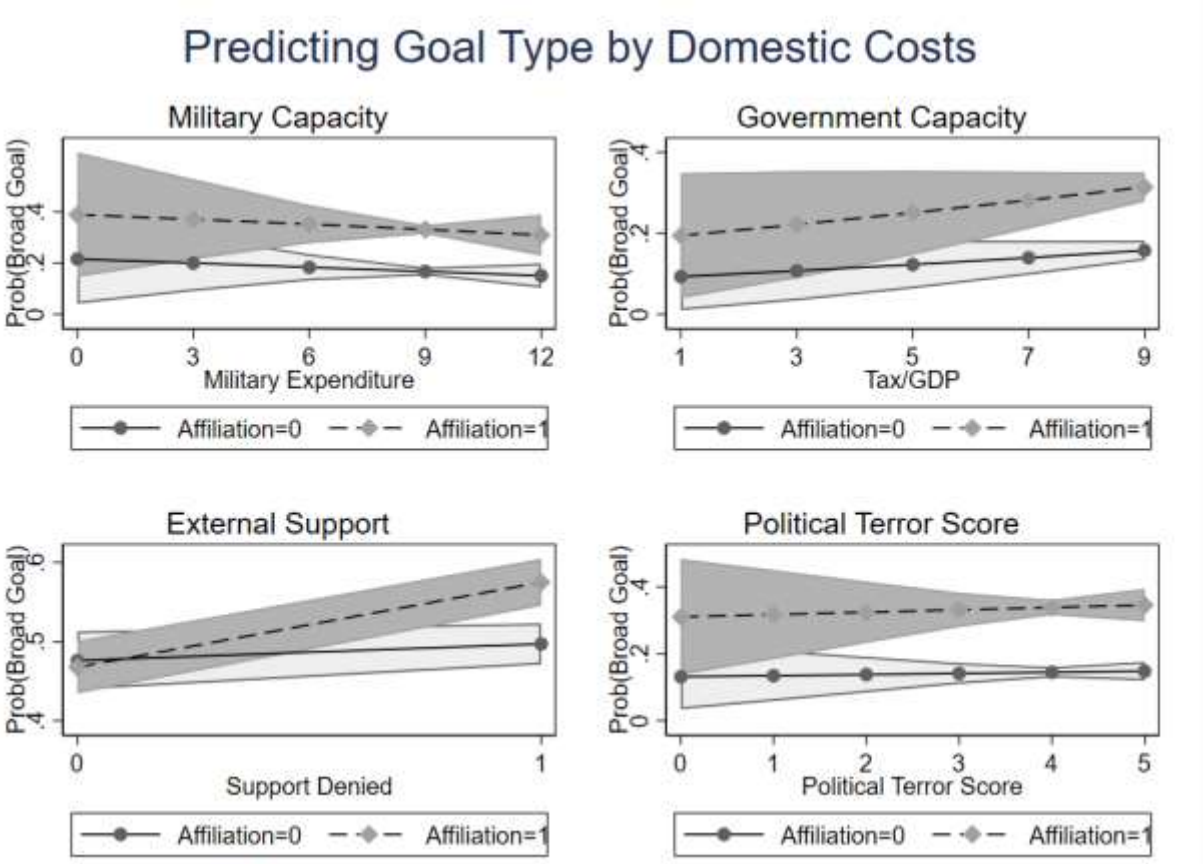

Figure B1: Predicting Goal Type by Domestic Costs of Signal – Country-Year FE

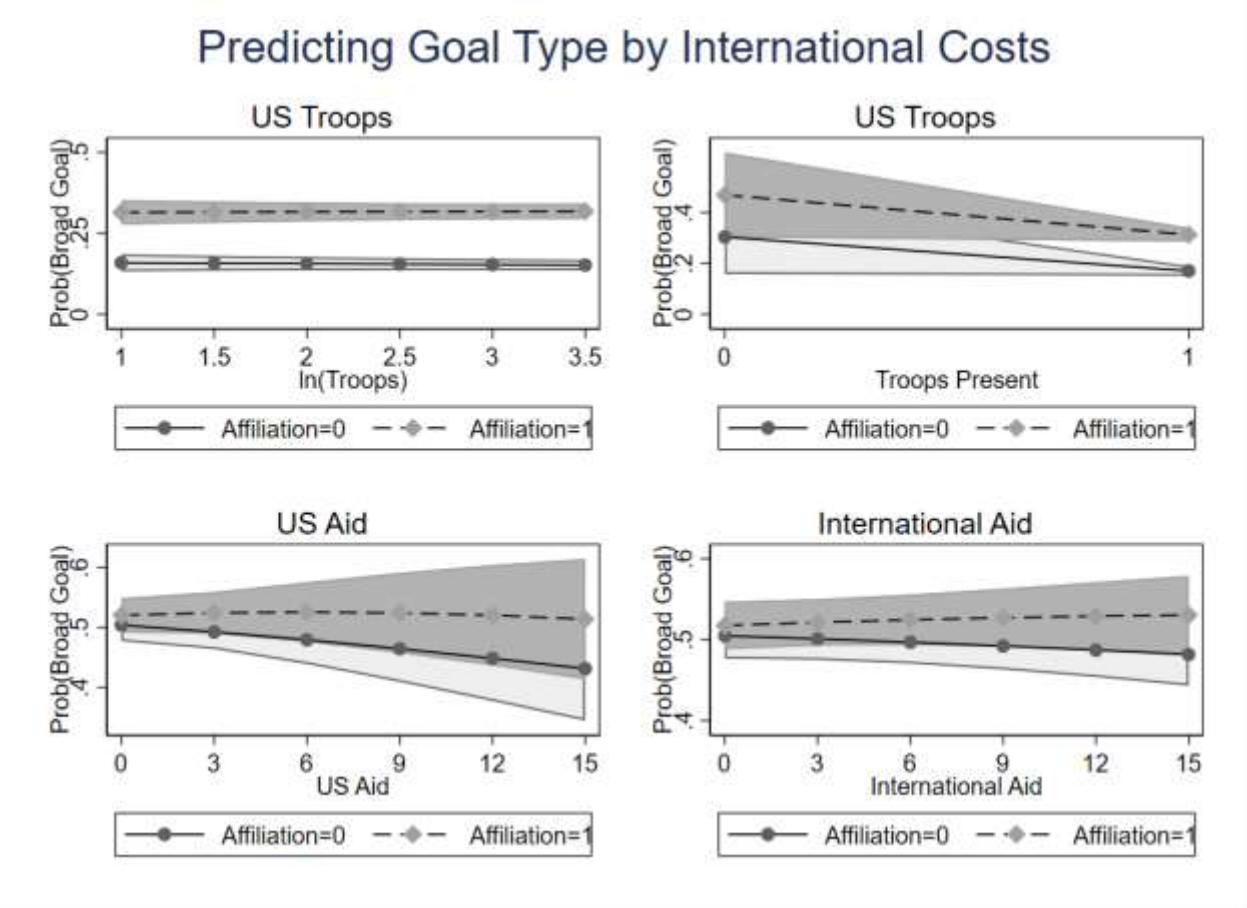

Figure B2: Predicting Goal Type by International Costs of Signal – Country-Year FE

APPENDIX C

Chapter 5 Appendix

North v1: Every year, the Finance Minister proposes the Union Budget for Parliament to approve. Currently, violent political groups have been in the news for undertaking actions, such as insurgency campaigns and terrorist attacks, which undermine India's interest of promoting peace and development around the world. Accordingly, this year India has an opportunity to alter their current investment amounts in counter-insurgency spending against Islamic Pakistani groups working against India's interests in the Jammu and Kashmir region.

North v2: Every year, the Finance Minister proposes the Union Budget for Parliament to approve. Currently, violent political groups have been in the news for undertaking actions, such as insurgency campaigns and terrorist attacks, which undermine India's interest of promoting peace and development around the world. Accordingly, this year India has an opportunity to alter their current investment amounts in counter-insurgency spending against Islamic Indian groups working against India's interests in the Jammu and Kashmir region.

North v3: Every year, the Finance Minister proposes the Union Budget for Parliament to approve. Currently, violent political groups have been in the news for undertaking actions, such as insurgency campaigns and terrorist attacks, which undermine India's interest of promoting peace and development around the world. Accordingly, this year India has an opportunity to alter their current investment amounts in counter-insurgency spending against Islamic Pakistani

groups teamed with Lashkar-e-Taiba, working against India's interests in the Jammu and Kashmir region.

North v4: Every year, the Finance Minister proposes the Union Budget for Parliament to approve. Currently, violent political groups have been in the news for undertaking actions, such as insurgency campaigns and terrorist attacks, which undermine India's interest of promoting peace and development around the world. Accordingly, this year India has an opportunity to alter their current investment amounts in counter-insurgency spending against Islamic Indian groups teamed with Lashkar-e-Taiba, working against India's interests in the Jammu and Kashmir region.

South India Vignette 1

South v1: Every year, the Finance Minister proposes the Union Budget for Parliament to approve. Currently, violent political groups have been in the news for undertaking actions, such as insurgency campaigns and terrorist attacks, which undermine India's interest of promoting peace and development around the world. Accordingly, this year India has an opportunity to alter their current investment amounts in counter-insurgency spending against Chinese Naxalite groups working against India's interests in the Red Corridor.

South v2: Every year, the Finance Minister proposes the Union Budget for Parliament to approve. Currently, violent political groups have been in the news for undertaking actions, such as insurgency campaigns and terrorist attacks, which undermine India's interest of promoting peace and development around the world. Accordingly, this year India has an opportunity to alter their current investment amounts in counter-insurgency spending against Indian Naxalite groups working against India's interests in the Red Corridor.

South v3: Every year, the Finance Minister proposes the Union Budget for Parliament to approve. Currently, violent political groups have been in the news for undertaking actions, such as insurgency campaigns and terrorist attacks, which undermine India's interest of promoting peace and development around the world. Accordingly, this year India has an opportunity to alter their current investment amounts in counter-insurgency spending against Chinese Naxalite groups teamed with Maoist insurgents, working against India's interests in the Red Corridor.

South v4: Every year, the Finance Minister proposes the Union Budget for Parliament to approve. Currently, violent political groups have been in the news for undertaking actions, such as insurgency campaigns and terrorist attacks, which undermine India's interest of promoting peace and development around the world. Accordingly, this year India has an opportunity to alter their current investment amounts in counter-insurgency spending against Indian Naxalite groups teamed with Maoist insurgents, working against India's interests in the Red Corridor.

North Pakistan Vignette 1

North v1: Every year, the Finance Minister proposes a government budget for President to approve. Currently, violent political groups have been in the news for undertaking actions, such as insurgency campaigns and terrorist attacks, which undermine Pakistan's interest of promoting peace and development around the world. Accordingly, this year Pakistan has an opportunity to alter their current investment amounts in counter-insurgency spending against Islamic Pakistani groups working against Pakistan's interests at the Durand line.

North v2: Every year, the Finance Minister proposes a government budget for President to approve. Currently, violent political groups have been in the news for undertaking actions, such as insurgency campaigns and terrorist attacks, which undermine Pakistan's interest of promoting peace and development around the world. Accordingly, this year Pakistan has an opportunity to alter their current investment amounts in counter-insurgency spending against Islamic Afghan groups working against Pakistan's interests at the Durand line.

North v3: Every year, the Finance Minister proposes a government budget for President to approve. Currently, violent political groups have been in the news for undertaking actions, such as insurgency campaigns and terrorist attacks, which undermine Pakistan's interest of promoting peace and development around the world. Accordingly, this year Pakistan has an opportunity to alter their current investment amounts in counter-insurgency spending against Islamic Pakistani groups teamed with Tehrik-i-Taliban working against Pakistan's interests at the Durand line.

North v4: Every year, the Finance Minister proposes a government budget for President to approve. Currently, violent political groups have been in the news for undertaking actions, such as insurgency campaigns and terrorist attacks, which undermine Pakistan's interest of promoting peace and development around the world. Accordingly, this year Pakistan has an opportunity to alter their current investment amounts in counter-insurgency spending against Islamic Afghan groups teamed with Tehrik-i-Taliban working against Pakistan's interests at the Durand line.

South Pakistan Vignette 1

South v1: Every year, the Finance Minister proposes a government budget for President to approve. Currently, violent political groups have been in the news for undertaking actions, such as insurgency campaigns and terrorist attacks, which undermine Pakistan's interest of promoting peace and development around the world. Accordingly, this year Pakistan has an opportunity to alter their current investment amounts in counter-insurgency spending against Islamic Indian groups working against Pakistan's interests in the Jammu and Kashmir region.

South v2: Every year, the Finance Minister proposes a government budget for President to approve. Currently, violent political groups have been in the news for undertaking actions, such as insurgency campaigns and terrorist attacks, which undermine Pakistan's interest of promoting peace and development around the world. Accordingly, this year Pakistan has an opportunity to alter their current investment amounts in counter-insurgency spending against Islamic Pakistani groups working against Pakistan's interests in the Jammu and Kashmir region.

South v3: Every year, the Finance Minister proposes a government budget for President to approve. Currently, violent political groups have been in the news for undertaking actions, such as insurgency campaigns and terrorist attacks, which undermine Pakistan's interest of promoting peace and development around the world. Accordingly, this year Pakistan has an opportunity to alter their current investment amounts in counter-insurgency spending against Islamic Pakistani groups teamed with al-Qaeda working against Pakistan's interests the Jammu and Kashmir region.

South v4: Every year, the Finance Minister proposes a government budget for President to approve. Currently, violent political groups have been in the news for undertaking actions, such as insurgency campaigns and terrorist attacks, which undermine Pakistan's interest of promoting peace and development around the world. Accordingly, this year Pakistan has an opportunity to alter their current investment amounts in counter-insurgency spending against Islamic Indian groups teamed with al-Qaeda working against Pakistan's interests the Jammu and Kashmir region.

North India Vignette 2

North v1: A recent proposal calls for the Indian government to cease its "policy of restraint" along the Line of Control (LoC) in the Kashmir region. As Pakistani security forces and militant groups have increased their presence along the LoC, the Indian government has alleged an uptick in terrorist attacks. New calls have been made for India to engage militarily along the border in response to Pakistani violence.

North v2: A recent proposal, backed by the Indian-based groups working with the Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front, calls for the Indian government to cease its "policy of restraint" along the Line of Control (LoC) in the Kashmir region. As Pakistani security forces and militant groups have increased their presence along the LoC, the Indian government has alleged an uptick in terrorist attacks. New calls have been made for India to engage militarily along the border in response to Pakistani violence.

North v3: A recent proposal, backed by the Indian-based groups working with the Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), calls for the Indian government to cease its "policy of restraint" along the Line of Control (LoC) in the Kashmir region. These groups have ethnic ties to JKLF. As Pakistani security forces and militant groups have increased their presence along the LoC, the Indian government has alleged an uptick in terrorist attacks. New calls have been made for India to engage militarily along the border in response to Pakistani violence.

North v4: A recent proposal, backed by the Indian-based groups working with the Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front, calls for the Indian government to cease its "policy of restraint" along the Line of Control (LoC) in the Kashmir region. As Pakistani security forces and militant groups have increased their presence along the LoC, the Indian government has alleged an uptick in terrorist attacks. New calls have been made for India to engage militarily along the border in response to Pakistani violence. The groups working with the Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front could face negative and violent reactions from the government because of their affiliation, but continue to offer support for the proposal.

South India Vignette 2

South v1: A recent proposal, known as the "Integrated Action Plan" calls for the re-integration of leftist Indian parties into India's democratic society. These leftist parties have violently sought to overthrow the government in the Red Corridor region of India for many years. New calls have been made to engage with these parties, offering economic development tools, to prevent further violence.

South v2: A recent proposal, backed by some groups working with the Communist Party of India – Maoist, known as the "Integrated Action Plan" calls for the re-integration of leftist Indian parties into India's democratic society. These leftist parties have violently sought to overthrow the government in the Red Corridor region of India for many years. New calls have been made to engage with these parties, offering economic development tools, to prevent further violence.

South v3: A recent proposal, backed by some groups working with the Communist Party of India – Maoist (CPI-M), known as the "Integrated Action Plan" calls for the re-integration of leftist Indian parties into India's democratic society. These groups have ethnic ties to the CPI-M. The leftist parties have violently sought to overthrow the government in the Red Corridor region of India for many years. New calls have been made to engage with these parties, offering economic development tools, to prevent further violence.

South v4: A recent proposal, backed by some groups working with the Communist Party of India

– Maoist, known as the “Integrated Action Plan” calls for the re-integration of leftist Indian parties into India’s democratic society. The leftist parties have violently sought to overthrow the government in the Red Corridor region of India for many years. New calls have been made to engage with these parties, offering economic development tools, to prevent further violence. These groups working with the Communist Party of India – Maoist may face could face negative and violent reactions from the government because of their affiliation, but continue to offer support for the proposal.

North Pakistan Vignette 2

North v1: A recent proposal has explored using peace jirgas to resolve disputes along the Durand line. As security forces have increased their presence along the Durand line, the Pakistani government has alleged an increase in terrorism attacks. New calls have been made for the Pakistanis to engage in peace jirgas.

North v2: A recent proposal backed by the Pakistani-based groups working with al-Qaeda has explored using peace jirgas to resolve disputes along the Durand line. As security forces have increased their presence along the Durand line, the Pakistani government has alleged an increase in terrorism attacks. New calls have been made for the Pakistanis to engage in peace jirgas.

North v3: A recent proposal backed by the Pakistani-based groups working with al-Qaeda has explored using peace jirgas to resolve disputes along the Durand line. These groups have ethnic ties to the region. As security forces have increased their presence along the Durand line, the Pakistani government has alleged an increase in terrorism attacks. New calls have been made for the Pakistanis to engage in peace jirgas.

North v4: A recent proposal backed by the Pakistani-based groups working with al-Qaeda has explored using peace jirgas to resolve disputes along the Durand line. As security forces have increased their presence along the Durand line, the Pakistani government has alleged an increase in terrorism attacks. New calls have been made for the Pakistanis to engage in peace jirgas. The groups working with al-Qaeda could face negative and violent reactions from the government because of their affiliation, but continue to offer support for the proposal.

South Pakistan Vignette 2

South v1: A recent proposal calls for the Pakistani government to cease its "policy of restraint" along the Line of Control (LoC) in the Kashmir region. As Indian security forces and militant groups have increased their presence along the LoC, the Pakistani government has alleged an uptick in terrorist attacks. New calls have been made for Pakistan to engage militarily along the border in response to Indian violence.

South v2: A recent proposal backed by the Pakistan-based groups working with Kashmiri tanzeems calls for the Pakistani government to cease its "policy of restraint" along the Line of Control (LoC) in the Kashmir region. As Indian security forces and militant groups have increased their presence along the LoC, the Pakistani government has alleged an uptick in terrorist attacks. New calls have been made for Pakistan to engage militarily along the border in response to Indian violence.

South v3: A recent proposal backed by the Pakistan-based groups working with Kashmiri tanzeems calls for the Pakistani government to cease its "policy of restraint" along the Line of Control (LoC) in the Kashmir region. These groups have ethnic ties to the region. As Indian security forces and militant groups have increased their presence along the LoC, the Pakistani government has alleged an uptick in terrorist attacks. New calls have been made for Pakistan to engage militarily along the border in response to Indian violence.

South v4: A recent proposal backed by the Pakistan-based groups working with Kashmiri tanzeems calls for the Pakistani government to cease its "policy of restraint" along the Line of

Control (LoC) in the Kashmir region. As Indian security forces and militant groups have increased their presence along the LoC, the Pakistani government has alleged an uptick in terrorist attacks. New calls have been made for Pakistan to engage militarily along the border in response to Indian violence. The groups working with the Kashmiri tanzeems could face negative and violent reactions from the government because of their affiliation, but continue to offer support for the proposal.

Demographic Questions

What is your age in years?

- 18 to 34 years
- 35 to 54 years
- 55 years or older

What is your sex?

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

What is the highest class you completed?

- Primary
- Secondary
- University
- Graduate (Masters or PhD)

Are you married?

- Yes
- No

Were you born in India?

- Yes
- No

Do you currently live in India?

- Yes
- No

In what State do you live?

▼ Andaman and Nicobar Islands ... West Bengal (36)

What country do you currently live in?

What language did you grow up speaking?

_____

Do you have a religious preference?

- Islam
- Hindu
- Christian
- Bhuddism
- Other

How would you describe your financial situation compared to last year at this time?

- Much better
- Somewhat better
- About the same
- Somewhat worse
- Much worse

Where do you fall on the political spectrum?

- Left (Liberal)
- Center-Left
- Center
- Center-Right
- Right (Conservative)

How important is a democratically elected government to you?

- Not at all important
- Slightly important
- Important
- Fairly important
- Very important

How do you feel about the United States' involvement in your government's politics?

- Extremely appropriate
- Somewhat appropriate
- Neither appropriate nor inappropriate
- Somewhat inappropriate
- Extremely inappropriate

APPENDIX D

Chapter 6 Appendix

VARIABLES	(A1) Attacks	(A2) Attacks	(A3) Suicide	(A4) Suicide
# Pledge	1.06**		0.88**	
	(0.03)		(0.06)	
Δ Pledge		1.00		0.97
		(0.08)		(0.20)
Pledge	0.83	1.62***	0.10***	2.12***
	(0.32)	(0.17)	(0.08)	(0.41)
Pledge * # Pledge	1.05		1.27***	
	(0.03)		(0.08)	
Pledge * Δ Pledge		1.15		1.14
		(0.10)		(0.24)
ln(GDP)	1.00**	1.00**	1.00	1.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
ln(Population)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Regime Change	0.87	0.86	0.81	0.76
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.15)	(0.14)
Civil War	2.19***	2.15***	3.30***	3.19***
	(0.25)	(0.25)	(0.78)	(0.75)
Size	1.92***	1.64***	2.36*	1.28
	(0.29)	(0.25)	(1.12)	(0.58)
Public Goods	2.47***	3.62***	10.62	23.57***
	(0.63)	(0.90)	(15.49)	(27.32)
Reputation	0.92	1.01	0.54	0.66
	(0.12)	(0.13)	(0.22)	(0.25)
Overall Yearly Attacks	1.00***	1.00***	1.00**	1.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Age	0.81***	0.85***	0.86**	0.89
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.07)	(0.07)
Age2	1.02***	1.02***	1.01***	1.02***
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Alliance	0.93***	0.88***	0.78***	0.72***
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.07)	(0.06)
Competition	0.85***	0.84***	0.74***	0.72***
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.08)	(0.08)
ISIS	3.52***	2.94***	5.79	3.54
	(1.08)	(0.93)	(7.37)	(4.51)
Regime (Anocracy)	1.26	1.21	1.11	1.26
	(0.24)	(0.23)	(0.41)	(0.49)
Regime (Democracy)	1.38*	1.25	1.38	1.19
	(0.27)	(0.24)	(0.63)	(0.56)
Constant	0.03***	0.08***	0.24	0.18*
	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.30)	(0.17)
Observations	2,642	2,648	2,214	2,216

Negative Binomial with fixed effects
Yearly robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table D1: Regression table for Figure 20

VARIABLES	(A5) Type	(A6) Type	(A7) Target	(A8) Target
# Pledge	1.06		1.09	
	(0.07)		(0.06)	
Δ Pledge		0.95		0.89
		(0.08)		(0.06)
Pledge	0.36	2.50***	0.53	2.22**
	(0.26)	(0.80)	(0.33)	(0.78)
Pledge * # Pledge	1.21***		1.15***	
	(0.07)		(0.06)	
Pledge * Δ Pledge		1.25*		1.25**
		(0.15)		(0.14)
ln(GDP)	1.00*	1.00	1.00	1.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
ln(Population)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Regime Change	0.41***	0.38***	0.45***	0.44***
	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.12)	(0.11)
Civil War	2.92**	2.54**	2.64***	2.39**
	(1.28)	(1.12)	(0.96)	(0.91)
Size	2.85**	3.03**	3.13**	3.28**
	(1.49)	(1.67)	(1.61)	(1.76)
Public Goods	2.14	1.83	1.41	1.27
	(2.29)	(2.13)	(1.26)	(1.27)
Reputation	0.51*	0.66	0.52*	0.63
	(0.19)	(0.26)	(0.19)	(0.24)
Overall Yearly Attacks	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Age	0.88	0.89	0.87	0.87
	(0.14)	(0.16)	(0.14)	(0.15)
Age2	1.01	1.01	1.01	1.01
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Alliance	0.89	0.90	0.92	0.93
	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Competition	0.86*	0.87	0.89	0.89
	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.08)
ISIS	2.32	1.76	1.72	1.89
	(1.34)	(1.19)	(0.87)	(1.18)
Regime (Anocracy)	1.18	1.40	1.30	1.50
	(0.53)	(0.59)	(0.51)	(0.54)
Regime (Democracy)	1.15	1.37	1.34	1.56
	(0.43)	(0.52)	(0.53)	(0.64)
Observations	2,650	2,656	2,650	2,656

Ordered Logit with fixed effects
Yearly robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table D2: Regression table for Figure 21

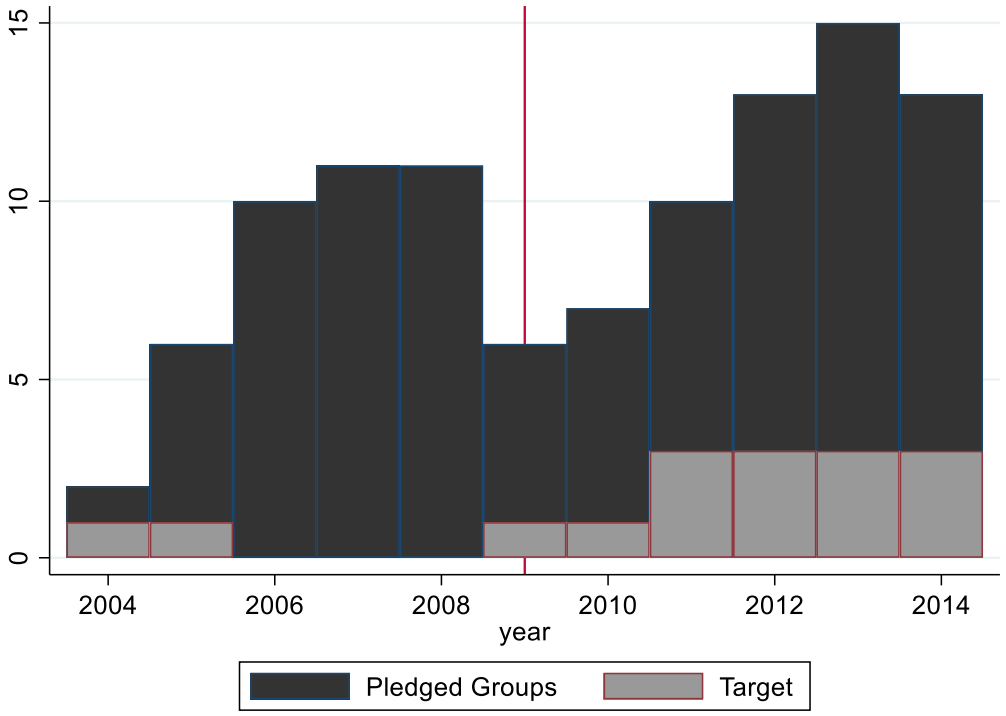

Figure D1: AAB - Severity by # of AQ pledged groups

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